Summary of Previous Education Studies

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RECENT & UPCOMING K-12 EDUCATION STUDIES

Legislative & State Agency Studies

House K-12 Finance Workgroup (December 2004)

The House K-12 Finance Workgroup was a bi-partisan group of members from the education and appropriations committees that met during the 2004 interim. The workgroup issued findings in July 2004. They concluded: The general approach of our K-12 funding framework is structurally sound. There are, however, a number of weaknesses in our funding formulas that need further consideration, and more could be done to better align the funding structure with our education policies.

Recommended next steps from the workgroup:

1. Compensation:
    - Teacher Salary Structure: The legislature should establish a process to evaluate a new teacher salary structure that is aligned with our standards-based policies and our certification system.
    - State Salary Allocations for Teachers, Classified Staff and Administrators: Differences in salary allocations should be more rational and equitable.
2. Special Education Allocations and Safety Net Process: Conduct an in-depth examination of the funding structure.
3. Student Transportation Formula: Conduct a comprehensive study of the student transportation allocation and bus depreciation system.
4. LAP Formula Change: Develop the new formula and re-examine using poverty as the sole funding driver.
5. Grandfathered levy lid districts: Re-examine grandfathered levy lids, keeping in mind the key role played by levy equalization in maintaining equity.

House Education Finance Structure Subcommittee (2005)

During the 2005 legislative session, the House created an Education Finance Structure Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee to continue the work of the interim Workgroup. This subcommittee considered both K-12 and Higher Education finance issues during 10 meetings over five weeks. (The higher education recommendations are discussed in the summary of the higher education studies.) The subcommittee divided into four workgroups, with the workgroups making recommendations to the Subcommittee. The workgroups' recommendations were as follows:

SPECIAL EDUCATION

1. Give consideration to the following changes in the existing structure:

    a) Eliminate local maintenance of effort requirement (line 25) as a barrier to accessing the safety net.

    b) In addition to the current high cost category, add a safety net category of percentage enrollment or some other alternative to deal with high concentrations of medium-cost students.

    c) Create additional capacity within the current enrollment index by removing 3 and 4 year olds from the calculation.

2. JLARC and the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) should examine current special education expenditure reporting requirements and districts' application of those requirements, and recommend ways of making the accounting system more transparent.

3. Any changes to the existing funding structure should be informed by the results of the JLARC/OSA study, and should be developed by a Task Force made up of legislators, advocates, district representatives, SPI, parents, special education experts and the Governor.

4. Funding should be provided for a web-based IEP development system.

Student Transportation: JLARC should review the student transportation funding formulas and make recommendations on potential changes to those formulas.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

1. Administrator Salary Allocations

    a. Base state salary allocations on education and experience of each administrator, and index allocation levels to the teachers' salary grid. Phase in new system over 6 years.

2. Classified Salary Allocations

    a. Increase the state-funded staffing ratio from 60:1 (students to staff) to 58.34:1 (the actual staffing ratio in the general apportionment program).

    b. Equalize district allocations over six years by bringing all districts' "average" allocated salary up to the top allocated salary.

    c. Create a task force to look at ways to create salary bands for classified staff.

3. Grandfathered Salary Districts (CIS): Put process in place to finish equalizing district CIS salary allocations in one of two ways

    a. Provide increases above I-732 to districts not grandfathered. An additional 1% each year of the next biennium would leave 11 districts grandfathered —OR—

b. Hold back I-732 salary increases to grandfathered districts until they are on the statewide schedule.

4. Professional Certification and the Salary Grid

   The problems in the professional certification and renewal processes should be addressed before changes to the salary grid are implemented. Those teachers already working toward their professional certification should be provided either a flat bonus or moved to the BA+30 column on the salary allocation grid.

5. Knowledge and Skills-Based Pay and Incentives

   Create a six-year compensation pilot that permits school districts to experiment with different compensation models, subject to a list of conditions that include a requirement that local stakeholders affected by the proposal must agree to participate.

6. Regional Cost-of-Living Adjustments

   a. Implement one of two methods of adjusting salaries:

      i. Calculating an adjustment based on county-wide data —OR—

      ii. Calculating an adjustment based on neighboring counties.

   b. Potential sources of funding identified were: state; state with county match; county-level property tax.

JLARC, K-12 Finance and Student Performance Study (September 1999)

This study was conducted in response to a legislative mandate to examine issues relating to finance and performance in Washington State K-12 schools. Major conclusions are:

- Washington's system of funding school districts is equitable, as is the distribution of resources by districts to individual schools. While districts and schools have different levels of funding, they tend to spend their money in the same way. For example, nearly all districts spend about 60 percent of their funds on instruction, regardless of their size or spending level.
- The level of teacher education and experience is lower in small districts and schools and those having higher percentages of students with special needs. However, student-teacher ratios are lower (i.e., classes are smaller) in these districts. Nevertheless, Washington's student-teacher ratio is one of the highest nationwide (i.e., classes are among the largest). This is due to higher than average staff compensation costs and per pupil expenditures that are about the national average.
- External forces beyond the control of educators, such as family income and parent education, have more influence on student performance than education-related factors. Having smaller classes can lead to better student performance in the early grades, although improving teacher quality may improve student performance more, and be more cost-effective, than reducing the student-teacher

ratio. Reorganizing the use of school time and resources is also a cost-effective means of improving student performance.

- Districts report considerable information related to their district and school operations to the state, although they are not required to report data on expenditures or certain student groups at individual schools. Collecting school expenditure data would be difficult and may not be very useful. However, collecting data on certain student groups that most districts already maintain would facilitate analyses of schools that share similar student populations as well as support education reform and accountability efforts.

Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee on K-12 Finance (1995)

The 1993 legislature created a legislative committee to study the common school funding system and to report to the legislature findings and recommendations for a new funding model. The committee studied Washington's K-12 finance system, the evolution of the finance system over time, legal foundations of Washington's finance system, and national legal trends. The committee also took testimony from the various K-12 associations, business, parents, and independent analysts on the strengths and weaknesses of the finance system. The report provides a summary of Washington's finance system, an evaluation of how Washington's finance system relates to the principles of a good system and how it compares to national trends, and a list of issues regarding Washington's K-12 finance system identified by members of the committee.

The analysis found that the Washington school finance system compared very well with seven concepts used to define an optimal system and also compared well against the current trends in school finance. Three areas were identified where Washington could do more to keep up with national trends: adding flexibility for local school districts; changing the way teacher salaries are set; and adding a performance-based incentive.

Committee members identified six areas for potential changes:

1. Definition of Basic Education: The Doran decisions required the legislature to define basic education and fully fund it. Also, the court suggested that the legislature should review the formula as the education system evolves and changes. More than ten years have passed since the last significant changes to the definition of basic education. The legislature should initiate a comprehensive study concerning:

    a. Whether the current funding formulas are still valid;

    b. What programs are included in basic education; and

    c. Whether basic education is fully funded.

2. Specific elements of the K-12 Funding System: During the course of its work, the committee raised various issues concerning the appropriateness and adequacy of programs and funding formulas. The following were identified as needing review:

    a. Potential regional cost-of-living factor for salary allocations;

    b. Potential regional cost of operations factor;

c. Current non-employee related cost allocations;

d. Current administrator salary allocations;

e. The lack of increments in state allocations for classified staff salaries;

f. The higher costs of educating students in high-stress urban and rural communities;

g. Correlation of certificated instructional staff salaries with performance and/or skills; and

h. The lack of performance incentives for successful programs.

3. Governance: State K-12 dollars are allocated to Washington's 296 school districts. The legislature has delegated to school boards the authority to set local priorities. However, the legislature has also set in place various requirements that restrict local flexibility. The legislature should increase local flexibility and local control by reducing state restrictions on local school board funding decisions and focus more on requiring school districts to be accountable for the basic education goals for the Basic Education Act and the 1993 Education Reform Act (HB 1209).

4. School District Reports: The current state accounting system and accompanying reports should be redesigned for the use of the public and local decision makers. They need to be clearer, in lay language and easily accessible by the community.

5. Long Term Levy Policy: Since the inception of the basic education act and the levy lid law in 1977, the legislature has continually amended the levy lid. Advocates for raising the lid have cited the right of local voters to tax themselves to support schools. Opponents of raising the lid have objected to the increasing disparity in resources available to wealthy and poor districts. Questions raised by committee members include:

   a. Are levies critical in funding basic education?

   b. Is the growing disparity of resources between districts creating the threat of another lawsuit?

   c. Do Initiative 601 and potential reductions in state funding make local levies more critical?

   d. Is it unfair for education spending to depend on the value of the local property tax base?

6. Initiative 601: K-12 enrollment does not grow at the same pace as state population. The legislature should revise I-601 to reflect this disparity.

Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding: Putting Children First – Improving Student Performance in Washington State (December 1992)

In recent decades, Washington and the nation have been awash in change. Our communities have changed; our technology has multiplied; our workplaces have been remade; and our economy has been reshaped almost beyond recognition.

It appears clear that we need a new set of working assumptions to help guide state officials, local teachers and administrators, and the parents, business leaders, and townsfolk who work as education's partners. Based on the state's experience with "Schools for the 21st Century," as well as the state's national leadership in providing preschool programs for every "at-risk" four-year-old, seven basic assumptions can serve as the foundation for school improvement:

1. All students can learn at significantly higher levels.
2. We should worry as much about ends as means.
3. Student assessment should be based on performance and mastery.
4. New accountability mechanisms must be developed.
5. The professional growth of educators must be encouraged.
6. Regulatory burden must be lifted.
7. Major new efforts require new resources.

These new assumptions add up to a mandate to change the current education system from one controlled by, and focused largely on, inputs to one designed to improve student outcomes, i.e. student learning.

EDUCATION'S ENDS – STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

At the root of the Council's proposal lie four learning goals for all students. In combination, the four goals listed below represent the skills and attributes our young people will need to function effectively in their families, their communities, their local economies and their personal lives. Schools, together with parents and communities, will ensure that all students develop the knowledge, skills and attributes essential to function effectively and lead successful lives:

Goal 1: Communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings.

Goal 2: Know and apply the core concepts and principals of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; arts; humanities; and healthful living.

Goal 3: Think critically and creatively, and integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.

Goal 4: Function as caring and responsible individuals and contributing members of families, work group and communities.

STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT AND MASTERY

In 1992, bipartisan majorities in the Legislature established the Commission on Student Learning and asked it to establish statewide student performance standards (Essential Learning Requirements) and a "performance-based assessment" system in place of current standardized achievement tests. As part of this new assessment system, the Commission will develop a "certificate of mastery", a certificate all students will

be required to earn before receiving a diploma. The certificate should serve as cumulative evidence of that students know and are able to do.

The certificate will serve as a new form of credential that, unlike the high school diploma which largely acknowledges courses completed, validates student competence in the learning goals. It is intended not to replace the high school diploma, but to supplement the diploma, and should prove as valuable to students planning further immediate education as to those planning to enter the work force. The certificate is intended for all students. It should provide assurances to employers and colleges and universities that students do, in fact, possess the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes expected of a high school graduate.

With regard to the certificate of mastery, the Council anticipates that students will have the benefit of multiple opportunities to demonstrate their mastery. Most students will obtain the certificate around age 16. Whenever they certificate is obtained, students will have it in hand before entering the later high school years. Then they can benefit from a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum designed to prepare them for work or immediate further education, a curriculum including technical subjects and the arts, sciences and humanities, coupled with internships and apprenticeships as appropriate.

Finally, the Commission will also develop standards for all "certificated" school staff (e.g., teachers, educational staff associates and administrators), standards of what they should know and be able to do to help all students meet new learning requirements. Teachers and administrators need to be much more award of diverse learning styles, emerging teaching strategies, and new possibilities for integrating new technologies into the curriculum. The new standards will be in place by 1996-97 for all staff. The Commission will develop a performance-based assessment system as the foundation for certifying new teachers. Advanced voluntary certification will be provided by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards after 1996-97.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Schooling in Washington cannot be reshaped without a major new effort to encourage and reward professional development of educators. The Council believes the professional development program of the Commission on Student Learning is absolutely essential to the improvement effort outlined in this report. Two aspects of the Commission's work received particular attention from the Council: the professional development account, providing grants to support local school districts design and implement broad school improvement plans, and the mentor program, providing a ratio of one full-year, full-time mentor for every 15 first-year teachers to help them bridge the gap between the theory taught in college classes and the reality encountered in the classroom.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability across the board drives a performance-based system. It is at the heart of the learning goals established by the Council and the outcomes by which they will be measured. The Council proposes that they Commission on Student Learning report regularly to the Governor and the citizens of Washington on the progress being made in districts and schools to meet the performance requirements. The Superintendent of Public Instruction will also publish an annual report to the Legislature and the state on the implementation of this system and the educational progress of students, schools, and districts.

But accountability is a two-way street. If accountability mechanisms are to be effectives, they must provide rewards and assistance as well as consequences. Beginning in 1997-99, the Commission will develop a rewards program to provide incentives awards to schools meeting performance goals. At the same time, schools and districts that do not show improvement over time may be subject to a consequences program.

DEREGULATION

The Council's intent is that, to the maximum extent possible, all rules and regulations inhibiting increased student performance be repealed. The Council understands that this is a very tall order and that reasonable people may disagree on the necessity of particular rules and regulations. Therefore, a review process is recommended.

FUNDING

The Council believes that existing school formulas should be both amply funded and distributed more efficiently. The Council believes the state needs a funding system oriented toward student achievement rather than inputs, a system that is ample, flexible, stable, equitable, straightforward and accountable. The Council asks the Legislature to design, enact, and implement such a system.

SCHOOL CHOICE

The Council believes in encouraging as much choice as is possible within the context of publicly-supported schools. The Council recommends that all out-of-district tuition and transfer fees be prohibited beginning in 1993-94.

TECHNOLOGY

Two broad new initiatives to advance the use of technology in Washington's schools are recommended:

- Integrated two-way carrier system. The state should support an effort to develop and implement a statewide program to tie together schools, districts, educational service districts and institutions of higher education.
- Washington State Technology Initiative. The Superintendent of Public Instruction should support an effort to help schools integrate technology with planning, training, managing and teaching.

READINESS TO LEARN

While their more advantaged peers arrive from secure homes already knowing their letters, numbers and colors, perhaps already reading, "at-risk" children – those from poverty, those who have never known one or more parents, those from abusive families, those in foster care, or those challenged by disabilities – frequently arrive already lagging behind. The Council recommends a significant new effort to help schools meet the needs of these children and their families, an effort to identify these children earlier and encourage greater collaboration among many organizations capable of providing services for these youngsters. The Council recommends a pilot effort beginning in 1993-94, with staged development through the state by 1999.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Council recommends that by 1998, Washington establish a plan to provide every deserving student who holds a certificate of mastery and a high school diploma with a scholarship for two years of higher education at a state-supported institution.

JLARC, Special Education Follow-Up to 2001 Report (June 2003)

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction provided an update to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review and Committee (JLARC) regarding issues and recommendations raised in the December 2001 Special Education Study. The presentation includes a summary of actions taken in response to the JLARC study:

- OSPI revised Safety Net process based on high-cost individual student needs.
- OSPI implemented excess cost methodology requirement statewide.
- Shift from compliance to student-focused learning outcomes.
- Shift monitoring focus to "outcomes" and away from "access to eligibility."
- Integrated special education into Consolidated Program Reviews (CPR).
- Obtained a state improvement grant.
- Developed training to improve educational results through monitoring and better instruction.
- Annually analyze and share results of special education students participating in WASL and WAAS.

JLARC, Special Education Study (December 2001)

The 2000 Supplemental Budget directed JLARC to study the K-12 special education program, focusing on a review of the findings of the special education program audit summary reports prepared by the State Auditors, the adequacy of the excess cost definition for the special education program, the ability to determine individual school districts' safety net funding need in light of differing accounting methods, and the ability to uniformly determine individual school districts' safety net funding need in light of differing service delivery practices.

The study found that the information necessary to understand the linkages among Special Education funding, spending, educational services and educational results is largely missing or unavailable from individual school districts, educational service districts, and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Because available data do not include factors that explain why some students are receiving more service than others or why some services are more costly than others, the Safety Net Oversight Committee members must make funding decisions without being able to verify that differences in spending are due to factors beyond the control of the school districts.

JLARC found that the methodology for reporting school district Special Education expenditures falls within the legislative intent as stated in the Appropriations Act. However, OSPI could provide further clarification to school districts.

Summary of Recommendations

1. The State Auditor's Office should discontinue the Special Education Audit Team.

2. OSPI should work with stakeholder groups to evaluate the current monitoring criteria, consider how those criteria might be strengthened to ensure minimum standards of service for Special Education students, and report back to the Legislature and OFM with the results of its evaluation.

3. OSPI, with the assistance of stakeholders, should develop options for modifying the Consolidated Program Review to ensure that its findings are reasonably representative of individual districts, allow for a fair comparison of districts, and can be made available on the OSPI website. OSPI should present these options, with accompanying fiscal impacts, in a report to the Legislature and OFM.

4. Upon implementation of Recommendation 3 and any follow up actions to strengthen the monitoring process, OSPI should develop options for incorporating program monitoring results into the screening process for Safety Net award applications.

5. OSPI should clarify the policy concerning how the amount of Basic Education spending within Special Education is to be determined and calculated.

6. OSPI should report information on the full allocation of funds (i.e., both basic education and special education dollars) to school districts' special education programs, and in turn require districts to report the full costs (i.e., expenditures of both basic education and special education dollars) of their special education programs.

LBC and WSIPP, Washington State's Special Education Safety Net: Final Report of the 1995-96 Safety Net Process (October 1996)

The Washington Legislature directed the Legislative Budget Committee (LBC; predecessor to JLARC) and the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to study the current Washington State special education funding formula and to report on the results of this examination. The funding formula had been in place since the early 1980s. The study sought to determine the changes over the last decade in the special education population and program effects of the funding formula through an examination of: 1) Washington State trends, 2) local school district practices, 3) federal and state legal requirements, and 4) other states' special education funding formulas.

Washington State Findings:

1. Special education is legally considered a part of basic education and must be fully funded.

2. The drivers of the allocation formula were:

- Special education enrollment in each school district.
- 14 disability categories, each with a different funding amount.
- Staff mix (education and experience of special education staff).

3. Special education enrollment had increased twice as fast as regular education enrollment over the prior10 years.

- Special education students made up 11.1 percent of the K-12 population with an enrollment of 101,108 students in 1993-94.
- The terms of entitlement to special education are locally controlled within broad state definitions for eligibility.

4. Inherent in the funding formula was an incentive to choose more costly special education funding categories. Over the prior10 years, enrollment in several higher cost categories had increased:

- *Health Impaired* (9,966 students): 22 percent annual average growth; the increase was due to a large number of students identified with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.
- *Preschool* (12,780 students): 14 percent annual average growth; the increase was due to an active child find effort and more school districts serving children from birth up to age 3.
- *Multiple Disability* (2,959 students): 10 percent annual average growth; reasons for an increase are difficult to pinpoint.

5. Differences exist between the state's assumptions for the allocation formula and actual services provided by school districts.

- The total average hours of special education services based on school district Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) were lower than the hours the funding formula generates.
- The districts employed a lower number of certificated staff and a higher number of classified staff than the formula generated.

6. Student gains (education outcomes) are difficult to determine for special education students.

- IEPs do not document student benefits and progress.

Findings From Other States:

Several states have changed to special education formulas that allocate funds based on a percent of total enrollment in each school district, rather than an actual count of special education enrollment, to manage increasing costs. These states also allow special education funds to be spent on students who are not in special education, but who need remedial assistance.

Implications for Special Education Funding:

Washington's special education formula could be changed by:

- Making it simpler.
- Removing the link between funding and the number of special education students.
- Removing incentives for school districts to choose high cost funding categories.
- Providing incentives to help some students before they need special education.
- Developing accountability measures to assess student benefits and progress.

Based on the findings of this study and recent experiences of other states, the report cited two alternatives for legislative consideration:

1. Develop formula to allocate funds for special education students based on a percent of total district enrollment.

2. Develop a formula to allocate funds for special needs students--special education students and learning assistance program (LAP) students--based on a percent of total district enrollment.

Either of these two alternatives could include safety nets for high cost students and federal maintenance of effort concerns, an excess cost model, collapsing categories for funding purposes, use of special education funds for early intervention non-special education services and cost factors related to individual school districts.

WSIPP, Student Outcomes in Special Education: A Review and Study Options (January 1995)

The Washington Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to determine the feasibility of doing a longitudinal study of educational outcomes for students in special education. A longitudinal study allows the tracking of a population over some period of time in order to document changes in that population. This report summarizes what is already known about student outcomes for special education and suggests possible ways to learn more about special education programs.

Staff at the College of Education/Experimental Education Unit of the University of Washington have done research over the past decade on outcomes for those special education students who graduate from high school. They summarized their research on high school graduates from three school districts in Washington and national research on educational outcomes for such graduates. Their work is available as a separate report.

Highlights of their work in three school districts in Washington State:

- Students with learning and behavior disabilities graduate from high school at rates lower than those for non-disabled students: 60 % and 50 % respectively, compared to 81 % for non-disabled students.
- Employment rates, 5 years after high-school graduation, are comparable for learning disabled and non-disabled graduates (79 % and 78 %), but lower for those with behavior disabilities (43 %).
- Independent living rates, 5 years after high school graduation, are 66 % for non-disabled, 64 % for those with learning disabilities and 71 % for those with behavior disabilities.
- Postsecondary education attendance rates, 5 years after high school graduation, are 92 % for non-disabled, 71 % for those with behavior disabilities, and 63 % for those with learning disabilities.
- Postsecondary attendance rates are relatively high, but postsecondary graduation rates are substantially lower. Special education graduates are more likely to be enrolled in vocational and community college programs; their non-disabled peers are more likely to be enrolled in four-year institutions.

Their recommendations regarding a longitudinal system for collecting information on special education outcomes are:

- Any system for assessing outcomes in special education should be part of an educational data system for the entire K-12 system.
- Any such system should:
    - collect data at the school district level

- summarize data at regional and state levels
- follow cohorts of students over time (longitudinal)
- collect basic demographic student data
- collect data on types of educational services provided
- measure and assess student achievement regularly
- monitor school completion rates
- track post-school outcomes for 5 years

Future Directions for Special Education Outcomes Study: A major, comprehensive longitudinal study of special education outcomes is not a feasible option at present. In Washington State, we have had only limited experience with this approach in the field of K-12 education. Conducting such a study would be complicated and costly.

Four options for follow-up studies on special education outcomes, however, could shed light on issues that surfaced in the 1994 legislative studies of special education:

- Develop a tracking system for children served in the Preschool Developmentally Delayed program. What happens as students move from preschool into elementary school? What kinds of educational programs do they receive? What types of special education services, if any, do they receive? Is it possible to measure and track outcomes for preschool students as they progress through the K-12 system?
- Describe the educational services provided to children in the Behavior Disabilities funding category in a sample of Washington's school districts. Assess the feasibility of defining and tracking educational outcomes for such students. How are they accommodated in regular classes? What are the educational attainments for students with behavior disabilities?
- Develop a pilot project with interested school districts for a different approach in special education, which would foster a more dynamic interaction of student assessment, instruction, curriculum content, student learning and measurements of student progress.

Develop a link between defining and tracking outcomes in special education and the assessment activities of the Commission on Student Learning. Students with special needs will be included in any future data tracking system that will document student educational attainment in Washington State. Any longitudinal approach for special education will have to link up with the Commission's overall directions for Washington's K- 12 system.

WSIPP, Outcomes in Special Education: What We Know and How We Could Know More (December 1994)

At legislative direction in the 1994 Supplemental Appropriations Act, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy assessed the feasibility of doing a longitudinal study of educational outcomes for students in special education. A longitudinal study allows the tracking of a population over some period of time in order to document changes in that population. Conducting such a study in the field of K-12 education will be complicated and costly. In Washington State, we have had only limited experience with this approach.

This report provides a summary of what is known from the research literature on outcomes for special education students who graduate from high school in the U.S. and in Washington State. Professor Eugene Edgar and his associates at the College of Education/Experimental Education Unit of the University of Washington have carried out path-breaking research in this area over the past decade. For the Institute project, they have summarized their research on high school graduates from three school districts in Washington and national research on educational outcomes for such graduates.

WHAT ARE OUTCOMES FOR THE NATION?

- School Completion: Special education students graduate from high school at a rate lower than their non-disabled peers. While the graduation rate for all students is 83 %, the rate is 66 % for students with learning disabilities and 48 % for students with behavior disabilities.
- Employment: Five years after graduation from high school, employment rates are comparable for graduates with learning disabilities (71 %) and non-disabled students (69 %), but lower for students with behavior disabilities (47 %).
- Independent Living: Five years after high school graduation, fewer learning disabled (44 %) and behaviorally disabled (40 %) graduates are living independently from their parents than are their non-disabled peers (60 %).
- Postsecondary Education: Attendance. Five years after high school graduation, fewer learning disabled and behaviorally disabled (30 % each) graduates have attended postsecondary education or training programs than have their non-disabled peers (68 %).
- Other Patterns: Apart from these outcomes, very little is known about the progress of special education students during their school years. Some information is available on where students receive their education; more students every year receive their education in regular classrooms.

WHAT ARE OUTCOMES FOR WASHINGTON STATE?

From research on student outcomes from three school districts in Washington State, the following is known:

- Students with learning and behavior disabilities graduate from high school at rates lower than those for non-disabled students: 60 % and 50 % respectively, compared to 81 % for non-disabled students.
- Employment rates, 5 years after high-school graduation, are comparable for learning disabled and non-disabled graduates (79 % and 78 %), but lower for those with behavior disabilities (43 %).
- Independent Living rates, 5 years after high school graduation, are 66 % for nondisabled, 64 % for those with learning disabilities and 71 % for those with behavior disabilities. These patterns for special education graduates are higher than those for the nation.
- Postsecondary education attendance rates, 5 years after high school graduation, are 92 % for non-disabled, 71 % for those with behavior disabilities, and 63 % for those with learning disabilities. These patterns for special education graduates are higher than those for the nation, possibly reflecting the metropolitan nature of these school districts.
- Other Patterns: Postsecondary attendance rates are relatively high, although postsecondary graduation rates are substantially lower. Special education graduates are more likely to be enrolled in vocational

and community college programs; their non-disabled peers are more likely to be enrolled in four-year institutions.

OPTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:
If work were to begin on a longitudinal system for collecting information on special education outcomes, the University of Washington team suggests these directions:

- Any system for assessing outcomes in special education should be part of an educational data system for the entire K-12 system.
- Any such system should:
    - collect data at the school district level.
    - summarize data at regional and state levels.
    - follow cohorts of students over time (longitudinal).
    - collect basic demographic student data.
    - collect data on types of educational services provided.
    - measure and assess student achievement regularly.
    - monitor school completion rates.
    - track post-school outcomes for 5 years.

WSIPP, Learning Assistance Program: Options to Revise the State Funding Formula (June 2002)

The Institute was asked to examine options for revisiting the state's funding formula for the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) to enhance accountability for school performance in meeting education reform goals. Because school districts have long operated state LAP and federal Title I programs in tandem, the report analyzed both. Together, LAP and Title I made up 3 percent of state and federal revenue to districts in 2001-02. There is broad distribution of both LAP and Title I funds to more than 90 percent of school districts and most school buildings in the state. Districts follow three patterns in prioritizing the allocation of LAP and Title I resources among buildings:

- Early Intervention: More than 70 percent of LAP and Title I dollars go to elementary schools, and more than 80 percent of reported LAP and Title I students are in grades K-6.
- Student Poverty: Most surveyed districts allocate LAP money to buildings based on poverty, even though the state allocation at that time was based primarily on test scores.
- LAP as a supplement to Title I: In most districts, either all elementary buildings in the districts receive LAP money or LAP money fills in for buildings not eligible for Title I.

Approximately 90 percent of LAP and Title I resources are used to provide extra teachers and classroom aides. Districts continue to rely primarily on classroom aides for approximately 60 percent of program staffing. Surveyed districts relied on a blend of in-class and pull-out models of remedial assistance, with a slight tendency toward an in-class approach.

Given the limitations of statewide data, the researchers could not draw definitive conclusions about the effect of LAP and Title I on student test scores. Some schools operate targeted assistance programs, identifying and serving students 'most in need' of assistance first, while other districts provide services through school-wide programs, which allows flexibility in combining resources and an ability to provide services to all students in the school on an as-needed basis.

The study identified concerns that had been raised about the current LAP formula, raised policy questions to be considered in reforming the funding formula, and offered alternatives formula options to consider. Concerns regarding the existing formula at the time, which was based largely on test scores with a small amount targeted to high poverty districts, included: a disincentive to improve test scores which would lower future funding levels in a district; a disconnect with education reform which is focused on the WASL while this formula is based on norm-referenced tests that are not aligned with state standards; the relationship between test scores and poverty which has been considered as an alternative funding mechanism; and the lack of predictability in the LAP allocations because it is based on current year enrollments which fluctuate. In considering a new formula, the Institute suggested that policymakers consider the following questions:

- What objective is the funding formula intended to meet?
- What funding drivers could implement these objectives?
- If the formula has multiple objectives, what is the balance among them?
- What type of state oversight will be associated with LAP dollars?

Note: The Learning Assistance Program was restructured in the 2004 legislation with additional changes to the funding provisions enacted in the 2005 legislative session. Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, the formula will be based solely on poverty factors. In addition, the new money provided for this formula change in the 2005-07 biennium is dedicated to high school improvements.

LBC, Learning Assistance Program Fiscal Study (January 1995)

The Legislature directed the Legislative Budget Committee to examine funding issues in the Learning Assistance Program (LAP), a state-funded remediation program for students in grades K-9 who need extra help in school to acquire basic skills. At the time, program need and formula funding was based primarily on test scores. This report describes LAP and analyzes enrollment and expenditures at the local level in relation to the factors in the state funding formula.

State funding for LAP has increased from $12 million in the 1979-81 biennium to $108 million in 1993-95. The increase reflects:

- Expansion of the program in the mid-1980s from grades 2 – 6 to grades K-9.
- Declining test scores, especially since 1991.

The study observed that formula factors and actual practices are not the same. In a review of a selected number of local school districts, several differences between formula funding factors and program enrollment and expenditures were found. Based on these findings, the study presents four funding options for the legislature's consideration:

1. Retain the existing funding formula (at that time, based on fourth and eighth grade test scores in the state evaluation program). If desired, changes might be made to

    a. Allow carryover of unspent LAP funding to the next school year. Adjustments could also be made to the method used to calculate the percentage of students scoring in the lowest quartile, the main LAP funding driver.

    b. Modify the formula to more closely reflect the actual service pattern in the field by adjusting the number of funded units.

    c. Clarify the target population by defining the term "below grade level" in the LAP statutes.

    d. Develop alternative or additional measures of LAP effectiveness.

2. Add to the formula poverty or demographic factors that may be associated with low educational achievement. The main measure that could be used as a funding driver in addition to test scores is the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. This option would broaden the focus of LAP to recognize other need factors for funding purposes.

3. Base state allocations to school districts partly on a percentage of district enrollment and partly on poverty or demographic factors.

4. Fund LAP and special education together in a special needs formula.

WSIPP, English Language Learners in K-12: Trends, Policies, and Research in Washington State (January 2005)

General Findings: The enrollment in transitional bilingual instructional program (TBIP) has grown rapidly since the program was created, increasing from 2 to 7 percent of public K-12 students over the last two decades. These enrollment increases are partially explained by population growth among non-English speakers in Washington State. It is also due to students continuing in TBIP across school years with the percentage of students remaining in the program for more than three years increasing from 9 to 28 percent between 1986 and 2002.

Most TBIP programs are in elementary schools. There is great diversity in the students' native languages with over 160 native languages spoken by TBIP students in the 2001-02 school year. Multiple languages are found in most Washington School Districts with 50% of school districts working with 2 to 10 languages. Student characteristics, such as grade level and variety of languages spoken, influence program selection. Most Washington schools operate English as a Second Language programs for TBIP students, with smaller percentages operating both ESL and bilingual education (5%) or bilingual education only (5%). Bilingual programs are more likely to be implemented in elementary schools.

The current research on effective programs is inconclusive. A review of research literature revealed that few evaluations of bilingual education use sufficiently rigorous research designs to meet scientific standards. There is some evidence that bilingual programs can improve ELL student test scores, but the research does not address ESL instruction, which is the most common program in Washington schools. Student-level

TBIP data recently collected by OSPI will enable future research to identify instructional strategies associated with improved academic outcomes for ELL students.

JLARC, K-12 Transitional Bilingual Education (1992)

This review focused on whether bilingual programs enable students to meet the program goal of competency in English at a level that allows them equal educational opportunities. The state Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program is mandated by Chapter 28A.180 RCW. The study found that the program is generally operating within legislative intent by providing bilingual instruction, but there are steps that can be taken to improve local bilingual education programs.

School districts use three different program models to provide bilingual education: 1) instruction in English and the student's primary language; 2) ESL pull-out classes; and 3) instruction in a mainstream classroom, but with a teacher trained in helping special needs students. ESL is the primary method of instruction here in Washington.

Performance measurement. Neither districts nor OSPI have developed performance measures to gauge the success of the bilingual education program, other than scores on standard student achievement tests used to determine when a student can exit the program. The only data routinely collected is student length of stay in the program, and even that is inconsistent between districts.

OSPI developed the exit criterion for the program to be a score above the 35th percentile on a nationally-normed standardized achievement test. This JLARC report finds that criterion to be insufficient for measuring program success or student exit from the program. OSPI and other interested parties should develop alternate exit criteria. Additionally, school districts should collect long-term student data to compare the academic achievement of students exiting the program with those of their peers.

Teacher preparation. Teacher preparation is important and necessary as our schools have a growing population of bilingual students. Districts are training existing teachers in instructional methods for special needs students, including bilingual students, but they report a need for better preparation of new teachers.

OSPI oversight and coordination. OSPI does not have a formal process for sharing or disseminating innovative practices used by districts across the state. Similarly, OSPI does not have a process for sharing clarification of federal and state policy questions that may affect multiple districts.

Recommendations.

1. OSPI should develop standards and outcome measures for the bilingual program and report expected fiscal impacts of the standards to the legislature.

2. School districts should submit to OSPI the number of students who stay in the program longer than 3 years and the strategies employed to assist them in exiting.

3. The legislature should consider how teacher preparation requirements address the problems of bilingual and other special needs students.

4. OSPI should enhance bilingual program guidelines by developing processes to share best practices and instructional models between districts. OSPI should also share policy question clarifications with all districts statewide, and it should require districts to report length of program stay.

OSPI should submit a follow-up report to LBC (JLARC) based on the findings of this report and including an analysis of program data, such as why outcomes vary by district.

Joint Task Force on Local Effort Assistance (2002)

This joint legislative task force included members from the House and Senate as well as the Superintendent of Public Instruction and representatives of school districts, educational service districts, the rural education center, school administrators, and school directors. The task force concluded that the allocation formula for the Local Effort Assistant Program (LEA) met statutory intent and fit with the original purpose of the law. The specific conclusions of the task force are as follows:

1. Any change to the LEA formula should be done in the context of an overall review of K-12 finance and not as a stand-alone in the overall financing scheme.

2. A formal study of the K-12 finance system should be undertaken by the legislature.

3. The task force recognizes the budget challenges that the legislature faces in the 2003-05 budget, and recommends that should budget reductions to LEA be necessary, the current formula be maintained. Reductions should be done on a pro-rata basis.

4. Lastly, some minor anomalies were found in the administration of the LEA program that should be addressed by changing OSPI rules. These issues relate to fiscal agent money and special purpose federal grants going directly to school districts.

Senate Ways and Means & House Appropriations Committees Levy Equalization Study (December 1997)

The 1997 Legislature required that the House of Representatives and Senate fiscal committees study data and issues relevant to the state funded local effort assistance (levy equalization) program and prepare a report of findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

This study found that, historically, levy equalization policy has been closely tied to levy policy and that there are different perceived goals of levy equalization. The statutory purpose of the program is to equalize the property tax burden for the first 10 percent of levies; other commonly believed goals are that this is a program to assist poor school district and equalize revenue per pupil. The data showed that districts qualify for equalization because of low property values and/or high revenue levels.

A review of the levy equalization data found:

- Two-thirds of all school districts receive levy equalization; 73 percent are eligible.
- In many instances the highest equalization payments per pupil go to districts with the highest revenue per pupil.

- Almost half of the equalization districts receive state small school bonus payments.
- Large districts consume most of the equalization funding (87 percent goes to school districts with enrollment over 1,000 students).
- 43 districts (20%) with above average assessed value are eligible for levy equalization.
- Of districts with the highest free and reduced price lunch participation, 29 districts (17%) are not eligible for levy equalization.
- There is no specific statewide data on the nature of equalization expenditures.

The report did not make any recommendations to change the current levy equalization statute because the study had been unable to review important information, such as reliable expenditure data and some financial and property tax data. The report recommended that the Legislature continue to study the data and issues in preparation for the 1999 legislative session and cited a need for further public hearings and comparative analysis of other state practices.

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee/State Auditor, Alternative Learning Experience Programs Study (February and June 2005)

The 2004 Supplemental Operating Budget directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC), in cooperation with the State Auditor's Office (SAO), to conduct a legal and financial review of Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) programs within the state's K-12 public school system. The study mandate required an interim report. This report provides general background information on these programs and presents the results of a survey of school districts regarding the programs they operate. The major focus, however, is on those ALE programs that rely on digital or internet-based curriculum. The JLARC Interim Report offers six recommendations for these programs:

1. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) should modify its current rule regarding student/teacher contact requirements to provide for a process whereby a local school district can waive the requirement for weekly face-to-face contact for appropriate online and digital programs if it finds the program meets certain specified criteria, as developed and enumerated in rule by OSPI.

2. OSPI should revise its rules regarding ALE programs so that, for appropriate digital and online programs, course syllabi can be used as part of the required learning plan. In revising its rules to accomplish this, OSPI should also: a) clarify what additional information, if any, is required for student learning plans in online programs, and b) determine whether it would be appropriate to require differing levels of information and individualization for student learning plans, depending upon whether a student is enrolled full-time or part-time.

3. OSPI should revise its rules regarding ALE programs so that, for appropriate digital and online programs, FTE equivalency is based on the estimated weekly average hours of learning activity identified in the learning plan as long as a student is found, through monthly evaluation, to be making satisfactory progress.

4. OSPI should revise its ALE program rules to require that: a) Programs relying primarily on online or digital curriculum be approved by the local school board, and that individual courses be approved by a designated school district official; and b) school districts operating such programs annually provide to their school board a report on the programs, to include such information as deemed appropriate by OSPI. In addition, as part of the rules or in supplementary materials, OSPI should develop guidelines and criteria designed to facilitate local districts' review of such programs.

5. OSPI should revise its ALE program rules so that programs relying substantially on internet-based curriculum are required to include some form of self-evaluation component designed to objectively measure its effectiveness.

6. OSPI should revise its ALE program rules so that local school districts are required to report to OSPI annually on the number of ALE programs and the number of students enrolled in them.

The SAO included an interim report of its work and five recommendations:

1. Separately identify and report hours for ALE students. Until the State Auditor's Office conducted its limited survey in 2003, the size and diversity of these programs was unknown. During the audits of fiscal year 2003, they noted a number of school districts could not easily identify who or how many students were participating in ALE programs.

2. Standardize a template for reporting on individual plans to assist districts in tracking what to report regarding students in the program, documentation to retain as support and timelines for required periodic reviews. Throughout each of the ALE audits conducted last year and audits under way, the Office found a wide range of interpretations of what constitutes an individual student learning plan and the required elements. This differs between and within school districts. In every school district in which an ALE program has been audited, a desire for more guidance has been expressed.

3. Consider the value of the rule requiring a minimum student–to-teacher ratio or 70 percent of ALE funds to be spent. It appears some school districts are broadening their definition of allowable expenditures for parent-partnered programs in an attempt to meet the 70 percent expenditure rule. As a result, there is a disparity between "educational" opportunities for ALE students versus other students. ALE students are offered ski/snowboard lessons, hayrides, theme park trips, out of state trips and jet boat tours. Regularly enrolled basic education students are not offered similar opportunities.

4. Clarify the responsibility of school districts to approve curriculum taught to all its enrolled students. In most parent-partnered programs, it is left up to parents to choose a curriculum. In at least one school district, parents were reimbursed for purchasing and teaching religious material. Additionally, school staff overseeing ALE programs have stated they have limited or no involvement in choosing curricular material for these students.

5. Consider an ALE program approval process similar to that for vocational education programs. More then 260 ALE programs are operating across the state. In many instances, the individual charged with creating and operating the program lacks a solid understanding of how to apply state rules and what truly qualifies as an ALE program and what activities may be counted as educational for the purposes

of reporting. Guidance from the state could help promote successful operation of ALE programs and greater accountability.

JLARC, K-12 School Bus Bidding and Purchasing Study (December 2004)

The 2004 Legislature directed JLARC to examine the state's school bus bidding and purchasing practices and to determine whether state purchasing practices could further encourage competitive pricing while still allowing local flexibility and choice. JLARC examined historical bus purchase practices across the state and in other states across the country. The study concludes that the prices district pay for school buses in Washington are not unreasonably high and that the state could change the reimbursement process to make the annual payments to districts predictable.

The report makes three recommendations:

1. The Legislature should make permanent the bidding and purchasing system established in the 2003-05 biennium.

2. OSPI should examine the six promising practices identified for possible implementation in the state's bus-buying process.

3. If the Legislature wants to create more predictable annual payments to school districts, it should consider alternative ways to pay school districts for bus purchases. OSPI should study implementation of this recommendation.

JLARC, K-12 Supplemental Contracts (January 1997)

The 1996 Supplemental Budget required the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to conduct a study of supplemental contracts, which are used by school districts to compensate school district certificated staff for duties over and above their basic employment contracts.

The study found that between school years 1988-89 and 1995-96, supplemental contract payments to certificated staff increased from $79 million to $198 million, a 150 percent increase. As a percentage of total average compensation per certificated staff, supplemental contract income increased from 5 to 8 percent. If statewide spending is adjusted for inflation, and the Student Learning Improvement Grant funds are subtracted, the overall spending increase would be 74 percent.

In response to legislative interest, the study found that, in the aggregate, supplemental contracts were used to pay certificated staff for their time in 76 percent of the instances that they attend performance assessment training. Discrete data on training costs are not normally collected at the district level and were not generally available.

The study recommends that the legislature identify future data needs on staff training expenditures for education reform and performance assessment, and that school districts be made aware of these requirements.

Findings show that contract documentation practices vary widely among districts, and some may not comply with Office of the State Auditor (SAO) guidelines.

JLARC, K-12 Vocational Education (December 1996)

The 1996 Supplemental Appropriations Act included a proviso that mandated the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to conduct a follow-up to a 1995 Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee (LEAP) study of Secondary Vocational Education Funding. Specifically, the proviso required JLARC to: 1) analyze changes of expenditure patterns since the LEAP study; and 2) develop a funding formula for vocational education that includes more discrete funding elements than the current apportionment formula.

This study and the 1995 LEAP study were mandated by the legislature because of several concerns:

- Enrollment in vocational education is growing much faster than overall K-12 enrollment growth.
- While vocational education is funded at an enriched level compared to basic education, average vocational education class sizes were considerably larger than the class size assumed by the funding formula.
- Average actual class sizes that are considerably larger than the formula raise the question that vocational education revenues may be more than what is needed to fund vocational education programs.
- New methods of instruction within vocational education programs may involve larger class sizes; and therefore, may not require an enriched funding level

Study Findings

Following the issuance of the LEAP report, the legislature increased the formula staffing ratio to one certificated staff unit for each 18.3 students. This increase in the funded staff ratio narrowed the difference between the formula funded staff ratio and the actual staff ratio.

In response to a recommendation of the LEAP study, a group of approximately 20 pilot school districts volunteered to categorize their vocational expenditures by method of instruction. The results of this effort did not provide reliable information concerning the relative class sizes of different methods of instruction.

Developing a funding formula for vocational education that includes differential funding for various methods of instruction is problematic because of difficulties in defining the various methods of instruction.

Limiting funding by class size

- The concerns that led to this study can be addressed without developing a new vocational education funding formula. OSPI initiated a policy that limits the enriched vocational education funding by class size. Under this policy, OSPI only provides the enriched level of funding for the first 26 students in a vocational education class. If there are more than 26 students (or 30 students if the class is taught by both a teacher and a teacher's aid), the basic education level of funding is provided for the number of students above the limit.
- Such a policy is a simpler, more straightforward way of addressing the concerns about providing enriched funding for large classes.

- The OSPI policy limiting vocational education funding by class size has not been endorsed by the legislature.

Recommendation: The legislature should provide authority through the appropriations process for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to limit vocational education funding by class size.

JLARC, Educational Service Districts (February 1995)

The nine educational service districts (ESDs) are regional entities governed independently by boards elected by school board members of the local districts within each ESDs' boundaries. The ESDs act as regional service providers for a variety of services and customers including: fiscal services and insurance cooperatives for district offices; training programs and video libraries for teachers; program managers for federal and state early childhood development programs; and academic contests for students. Few ESD services are mandatory, instead districts can choose to participate. The Legislative Budget Committee (now known as JLARC) conducted a study to determine if ESD services are cost-effective for local districts and to assess the quality of those services.

The LBC found that the recipients of ESD services were generally, if not highly, satisfied with the service they received. Customers also identified that the primary benefit of ESDs was the access to services that might otherwise not be available. Moreover, many of the ESD customers indicated that the personal face-to-face contact that is provided through the ESD regional structure was an important aspect of both access and quality.

LBC found that there are few others providers that can offer many of the services delivered by ESDs. This was due to the specialized role played by the ESDs and the need for some programs to have consistent statewide coverage.

Through a survey, the LBC found that the local districts view the ESDs' prices as affordable. The only alternative to many ESD services is for a district to provide the service on their own. This is not financially feasible for many small and medium size districts. ESDs, on the other hand, gain economies of scale by pooling the resources of many districts.

The study considered whether certain ESD services might achieve further savings if provided on a larger scale. The results of the analysis suggested that there are no large financial gains likely to occur by providing these services on a larger scale. This is due, in part, because of the need to provide personal contact with customers. The study concluded that there are no compelling cost-saving reasons to consolidate ESDs. However, instances where ESDs act in cooperation provide another means by which potential cost savings can be achieved without large investments.

The report recommended that ESDs should collectively develop mechanisms to regularly identify opportunities for cooperation and cost savings. The ESDs should consider doing this as part of their system-wide strategic planning process.

WSIPP, Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification (December 2004)

Washington's alternative routes programs were created by the 2001 Legislature based on recommendations of the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB). The legislature included an evaluation component to be completed by the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP). The institute evaluated how well the programs met legislative objectives, based mainly on surveys of the first cohort of interns (2002-03). These interns resembled the teacher workforce in Washington:

- 13% were racial or ethnic minorities
- 28% had been paraeducators
- 31% were male
- Median age was 41

The Legislature outlined four main objectives for alternative routes programs: fill teacher shortages; meet the same state standards for certification as traditionally prepared interns; high-quality preparation; and flexibility and exepediency. The institute found that despite the short time for program development alternative routes met most of the legislative objectives, and some programs met all of the objectives.

Fill teacher shortages. Most who enrolled (88 percent) completed their program. Most graduates (86 percent) are certified to teach in shortage areas, and an even greater number (92 percent) reported working as teachers, according to the Washington State Institute for Public Policy's (Institute) Spring 2004 Intern Survey. This percentage is comparable to graduates of conventional programs in Washington State and higher than the 60 to 70 percent commonly reported in other states.

Meet the same state standards for certification as traditionally prepared interns. Alternative route interns must meet the same requirements as teachers certified through traditional programs. At five of the six original programs, interns were also required to pass a new pedagogy assessment, which is still being field-tested.

Alternative route interns were at least as well prepared, if not better prepared, to teach than new teachers from traditional programs, according to field supervisors (88 percent), mentors (76 percent), and principals in schools where the new teachers were later employed (96 percent).

High-quality preparation. Alternative route programs required a considerable time commitment. During the school year, interns took about 15 credits in addition to their full-time K–12 classroom responsibilities. Programs also required more intensive field training than traditional teacher programs. Interns spent considerably more time in the K–12 classroom, averaging 28 weeks compared with 10 to 16 weeks for traditional routes.

In terms of coursework, the number of required credit hours was similar to that of traditional programs. Course subjects and content were also similar. However, course schedules were modified to accommodate the time interns spent in the K–12 classroom, and most programs provided performance-based rather than class time options for earning credits. Alternative route interns rated the value of their coursework about the same as students completing traditional teacher programs.

Mentors were experienced teachers who had taught an average of 14.5 years. Over half (57 percent) had served as mentors before. Despite intentions to train all mentors, nearly a third of mentors to the first cohort reported receiving no training.

Interns tended to view their mentored internships as more valuable than their coursework in preparing them to teach. The more time interns spent with their mentors, the more valuable they deemed the experience.

Flexibility and expediency. The first alternative route programs varied greatly in terms of flexibility, adaptability to an individual's pre-existing knowledge and skills, waiving of coursework, and affordability. For example, in one program none of the interns were able to waive coursework while in another, 83 percent were able to waive coursework. This suggests that some programs had more difficulty creating alternatives to their traditional curriculum than other programs.

In the 2002–03 cohort, 20 percent of interns with at least a baccalaureate degree at enrollment earned a teaching certificate before the end of the school year.

WSIPP, Educational Opportunities in Washington's High Schools Under State Educational Reform: High School Responses to Expectations for Change

The 2000 Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to study public high school programs in Washington:

> *The study shall examine what high school educational opportunities are currently available for students. Information shall be gathered on program attributes, student demographics, and outcomes for high school programs including, but not limited to, college credit (e.g., advanced placement and running start), tech prep, distance learning, and career pathways.)*

To complete the reports, the Institute conducted a statewide survey of public high schools; interviewed educators, students, and parents at eight case study schools; reviewed national research literature; and analyzed state and national data. This final report addresses the following questions

- Are High Schools Increasing the Rigor of What Students Learn?
- Are High Schools Making Learning More Relevant for Students?
- Are High Schools Providing Learning Options for 11th and 12th Grades?

ARE HIGH SCHOOLS INCREASING THE RIGOR OF WHAT STUDENTS LEARN?

Most high schools that responded to the Institute's survey are increasing rigor by focusing on state standards and changing graduation requirements.

ARE HIGH SCHOOLS MAKING LEARNING MORE RELEVANT FOR STUDENTS?

Most high schools responding to the survey are developing portfolios, culminating projects, educational pathways, and educational plans to help students plan for the transition after high school.

ARE HIGH SCHOOLS PROVIDING LEARNING OPTIONS FOR 11TH AND 12TH GRADES?

Most learning options identified in statute for 11th and 12th grades are readily available in high schools across the state. The statute pertaining to the Certificate of Mastery lists a number of learning options for 11th and 12th grade students, such as Advanced Placement, Running Start, Tech Prep, and vocational-technical education. More than two-thirds of high schools report that at least five out of eight 11th and 12th grade learning options are readily available or available with minor difficulty. However, less is known about the extent of student participation in these options.

WHAT ADDITIONAL STEPS COULD POLICYMAKERS TAKE TO INFLUENCE EDUCATION REFORM IN HIGH SCHOOLS?

Based on the research literature and study findings, the Institute cannot recommend any single program or activity over others for state funding and support. However, policymakers have the following opportunities to influence further implementation of education reform in high schools:

- Monitor trends or decisions regarding:
    - What happens to high school dropout rates.
    - What happens to students after they graduate.
    - How the SBE assures that all students have an opportunity to learn state standards before the WASL becomes a graduation requirement.
- Obtain additional information regarding:
    - What models of assistance to struggling students are successful in high schools.
    - Enrollment and effectiveness of alternative education programs and strategies.
    - How successful are grant-funded initiatives to create smaller learning communities in high schools.
- Debate or discuss further:
    - Whether adjustments or alternatives to the WASL should be explored.
    - Level of state direction, guidance, or assistance for culminating projects, educational plans, and educational pathways.
    - Whether high schools should be held accountable by the state for other student outcomes in addition to the Certificate of Mastery.

WSIPP, Educational Opportunities in Washington's High Schools Under State Educational Reform: Background and Student Outcomes (January 2001)

The 2000 Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to study public high school programs in Washington:

> *The study shall examine what high school educational opportunities are currently available for students. Information shall be gathered on program attributes, student demographics, and outcomes for high school programs including, but not limited to, college credit (e.g., advanced placement and running start), tech prep, distance learning, and career pathways.)*

This interim report provides background for the study with a special emphasis on high school student outcomes and performance. The interim report addresses three questions, outlined below:

NATIONAL TRENDS: WHY REFORM HIGH SCHOOL?

Over the last two decades, the traditional American high school has come under criticism for lacking a clear curricular focus, not expecting high achievement for all students, and not providing personalized learning environments to engage students. A variety of reforms of high school are being tried across the country. Some focus on creating a demanding and standards-based curriculum, others on encouraging students to link what they learn in school with their future educational and career plans, and still others on changing the school environment.

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN WASHINGTON: WHAT ARE THEIR CHARACTERISTICS, AND WHAT ARE THE STATE'S POLICIES?

Seventy-two percent (291) of Washington's 406 high schools have students in "standard high schools" with grades 9 through 12 or 10 through 12. Of these 291 standard high schools, 45 percent have enrollments of over 1,000 students. The average size of standard high schools is 912 students. Twenty-three percent of all high school students are people of color.

The legislature and the State Board of Education (SBE) are responsible for setting policies for high school requirements. Current policies address the following topics: compulsory attendance, subject standards, assessments, Certificate of Mastery, educational pathways, and subjects and competencies needed for graduation. Over the last 30 years, the state has asserted more control over local school districts by establishing policies that follow national trends, such as increased graduation requirements and standards-based reform for all students. Standards-based reform in Washington shifts the expectations for high schools; they will be required to ensure all students, not just college-bound students, master high-level standards.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PERFORMANCE: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

The percentage of 10th graders who passed the WASL in 1999-00 included: 60 percent in reading, 35 percent in math, 32 percent in writing, and 78 percent in listening. Students of African American, Hispanic, and Native American backgrounds were less likely to pass the 10th grade WASL than Caucasian or Asian American students in 1999-2000.

Over the last five years (1995-99), Washington students had higher average SAT verbal and math scores than the national average. Washington students' average SAT verbal and math scores have also increased during those five years.

The Institute found that 24 percent of the 1995-96 9th grade class, expected to graduate in 1998-99, could not be located. An estimated three-quarters of youth under age 19 in Washington graduate "on time." These percentages have remained constant for the last 35 years.

Young adults continue to finish high school after age 18. The Office of Financial Management's State Population Survey (1997) estimates that 91 percent of young adults aged 25 to 29 have completed high school.

Sixty-five percent of young adults aged 25 to 29 in Washington have had some additional education after high school. Of these young adults, 9 percent received an associate's degree, and 31 percent received a bachelor's degree or higher.

According to the 1998 High School Graduate Follow-Up Study, 51 percent of college students enrolled in Washington's two-year community and technical colleges and 22 percent enrolled in four-year public universities (excluding Western and Evergreen) took at least one remedial course. The percentage of college students who passed the math placement tests in 2000 at four-year public universities ranged from 32 percent to 66 percent.

The Institute identified the following barriers to learning more about high school student performance:

- Reported dropout rates lack accuracy because there has been no uniform student identifier to match students who may have transferred to another school or dropped out and re-entered school. OSPI expects to have a voluntary statewide uniform student identifier ready to test in the 2001-02 school year.
- Currently, it is not possible to assess individual gains in student performance through a statewide test that measures the students' annual progress.
- With the exception of vocational courses, the state does not collect records on the kinds of courses high school students take to assess the changes in levels of coursework (e.g., remediation and advance placement).
- The Graduate Follow-Up Study cannot provide a complete and accurate picture of what happens to high school graduates because there are limitations on matching graduates to college and employment databases.
- Four-year public higher education institutions use different methods to provide data. Some institutions' data cannot be compared over time, such as cumulative GPA.
- The quality of policy-relevant outcome data on high school students is mixed and does not currently provide state policymakers with a solid baseline to determine what impacts education reform will have on Washington's high school students.

WSIPP, Teacher Preparation and Development (August 1999)

In the spring of 1998, the Board of Directors for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) directed staff to undertake a study of teacher quality in light of the high stakes of education reform. The primary research question is: Is the state ensuring that teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet the new academic standards?

INSTITUTE STUDY: TEACHER QUALITY AND THREE EARLY STAGES OF A TEACHER'S CAREER

The Institute examined three teacher preparation and development programs covering the early stages of a teacher's career:

- Pre-service Teacher Preparation (Residency Certificate)
- Beginning Teacher Assistance

- Professional Certification

STATE POLICIES TO ASSURE TEACHER QUALITY

The strategies to improve student learning are statewide standards, statewide performance assessments, and accountability. These strategies could also be used in Washington for teacher preparation and development in order to encourage effective teaching.

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION (RESIDENCY CERTIFICATE)

Increased consistency across teacher preparation programs is needed to ensure teacher candidates meet common minimum levels of performance.

BEGINNING TEACHER ASSISTANCE

The state beginning teacher assistance program has not been changed to reflect increased expectations for improved student learning under education reform.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

The professional certificate is not ready for statewide implementation. Increased oversight is needed to ensure candidates demonstrate common minimum levels of performance. Alternatively, the state could consider developing a state-administered assessment of teacher performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Washington, reliance on statewide standards, statewide performance assessments, and clear accountability for assuring teacher quality varies depending on the stage of teacher preparation and development. There are no consistent statewide standards for what teachers should know and be able to do that address each stage of a teacher's career. No statewide assessments measure the knowledge, skills, and performance of pre-service, beginning, or professional-level teachers, although numerous proposals have been made by SBE. Accountability for ensuring teacher quality is largely a local rather than a state responsibility, resting with individual colleges of education or local school districts.

Washington's long tradition of local control has influenced policy choices. There has been limited interest in strong state oversight for teacher preparation and development. However, education reform represents a new level of state involvement in education. The state has set high expectations for improved student learning. If the state wants to ensure teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet the new academic standards, it could also consider a new level of involvement in teacher preparation and development.

STATEWIDE STANDARDS

- Consistent statewide standards of performance for teachers could be developed, with benchmarks for the stages of a teacher's career. The standards could be developed with statewide participation of teachers, higher education faculty, school district personnel, and the public.
- The standards could then be used in all pre-service programs, beginning teacher assistance programs, principals' evaluations of teachers, and professional certificate programs.
- The statutory criteria for principals' evaluations of teachers could align with the new statewide performance standards. (Requires legislative action.)

STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

- All future teachers could take a statewide basic skills test prior to entry into pre-service programs. All teacher candidates could be assessed for content knowledge, and possibly pedagogy, prior to receiving a residency certificate to begin teaching. (Requires legislative action.)
- Beginning teacher assistance programs should incorporate informal performance assessments to encourage beginning teachers and their mentors to work on building knowledge and skills.
- Additional steps could be taken to ensure that performance assessments for professional certification are consistent and fair across certificate programs. Alternatively, a state-administered assessment process could be considered.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- There could be clear and explicit criteria to determine that pre-service and professional certificate programs meet state standards for program approval, including periodic follow-up and review of programs and candidate performance. Positive impact on student learning could be clearly defined to ensure it is measured in a consistent way across candidates and programs.
- State funding for beginning teacher assistance programs could be conditioned on a program's use of performance standards and informal performance assessments. State funding for TAP could cover all beginning teachers.
- Issues such as relevance, fairness, and statewide feasibility could be addressed in state approval of professional certificate programs. Alternatively, a state-administered assessment process could be considered.

OSPI, Characteristics of Improved School Districts: Themes from Research (October 2004)

To provide a better understanding of improved school districts and their characteristics and actions, the Research and Evaluation Office at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction collected and analyzed more than 80 research reports and articles. The studies focused primarily on district that have shown improvement at the elementary level, and all the schools in the district may not be high performing.

The studies shed light on the relationship between school district policy, programs, and practices and the improvement of student learning. An analysis of the studies identified 13 common themes, which have been clustered into four broad categories: Effective Leadership, Quality Teaching and Learning, Support for Systemwide Improvement, and Clear and Collaborative Relationships. Each of the themes is defined and described in the full report. The following is a listing of the themes using the four broad categories:

Effective Leadership

- Focus on All Students Learning
- Dynamic and Distributed Leadership
- Sustained Improvement Efforts Over Time

Quality Teaching and Learning

- High Expectations and Accountability for Adults
- Coordinated and Aligned Curriculum and Assessment
- Coordinated and Embedded Professional Development
- Quality Classroom Instruction

Support for Systemwide Improvement

- Effective Use of Data
- Strategic Allocation of Resources
- Policy and Program Coherence

Clear and Collaborative Relationships

- Professional Culture and Collaborative Relationships
- Clear Understanding of School and District Roles and Responsibilities
- Interpreting and Managing the External Environment

OSPI, Helping Students Finish High School: Why Students Drop Out and How to Help Them Graduate (December 2003)

This report summarizes the research and professional literature regarding the following questions:

- Who is a dropout?
- How many students drop out of school in the U.S. and in Washington State?
- Who drops out of schools and why?
- What can be done to reduce the number of dropouts?

No universally accepted definition of dropout exists. Dropouts are typically defined as students who leave school (not including transfers) before they graduate from high school with a regular diploma. Some students leave school before entering ninth grade, but most drop out during their high school years.

The dropout rate can be calculated in several ways, including how many leave in one year (an "annual" dropout rate) and how many drop out from the beginning of Grade 9 through the end of Grade 12 (a "cohort" dropout rate). As a result, dropout rates vary considerably, depending on the method used. The national dropout rate varies from 4–30 percent depending upon the method and definition used. The lower figure applies to the annual rate (the percentage of students who dropped out in a single year), while the upper figure is a cohort rate. The percentage of youth that leave school before graduation has decreased continually from 1972 to 1987, although the rate has remained quite stable since 1987.

In Washington, several studies have estimated the graduation rate using different methods. In August 2002 the Manhattan Institute estimated the on-time graduation rate as 67 percent and considered the remaining 33 percent as dropouts, even though many were still in school. A study for the Academic Achievement and

Accountability Commission released about the same time estimated the on-time graduation rate for the Class of 2001 as 70 percent using a different method, but the study did not estimate a dropout rate.

The state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) reported that 79 percent of the students in the Class of 2002 graduated "on-time." This figure excluded students who completed an IEP diploma or earned a GED certificate. However, that report noted serious limitations in the data reported by districts and noted the rate was actually much lower. With about 8 percent continuing their education beyond four years, the estimated on-time graduation rates for the Class of 2002 is about 66 percent. This figure is similar to estimates of the national cohort graduation rate.

White students had the lowest dropout rate while Black students had the highest dropout rate. Males dropped out at a higher rate than females. Of the students who dropped out in Grade 12, nearly one-third left school even though they had attended four years of high school. Another 28 percent of students had an unknown location and were considered to be dropouts, even though they may have graduated or be enrolled elsewhere. As the quality of data reported by districts improves, the graduation and dropout rates will become more accurate.

The report discusses research regarding student and family circumstances that may influence the likelihood of a student will drop out. In addition, it identifes educational policies and circumstances that also contribute to the dropout problem.

Students who struggle in the early grades are more likely to drop out, so sound educational policies and practices need to exist throughout the K–12 system. Schools and districts can begin by examining the effectiveness and unintended consequences of their own policies and practices. Areas to examine include discipline and attendance policies, the implementation of high standards, grading procedures, retention in grade, special education and remediation assignments, transitions between school levels, course content and instruction, school climate and relationships, and existing alternative programs. After conducting this work, policymakers, leaders, and other educators need to take the necessary and sometimes courageous steps to improve or change ineffective policies, practices, and programs or create new ones.

Broader efforts in school reform will also be necessary. These efforts include implementing the characteristics of effective schools, addressing the achievement gap, involving families and the community, accommodating personal crises, gathering and analyzing accurate data, providing sufficient resources, providing professional development opportunities, and designing effective targeted programs.

The state has provided some support in these areas, but it needs to expand its efforts to support dropout prevention and recovery programs and help develop appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies for these programs. The state can also support evaluations of programs and assist in increasing the effectiveness of alternative programs.

OSPI, Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools: A Research-Based Resource for School Leadership Teams to Assist with the School Improvement Process (January 2003)

Through a review of more than 20 studies, Washington school improvement specialists and researchers identified nine characteristics of high performing schools, as follows:

1. *Clear and Shared Focus* Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.

2. *High Standards and Expectations for All Students* Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

3. *Effective School Leadership* Effective instructional and administrative leadership is required to implement change processes. Effective leaders are proactive and seek help that is needed. They also nurture an instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth. Effective leaders can have different styles and roles—teachers and other staff, including those in the district office, often have a leadership role.

4. *High Levels of Collaboration and Communication* There is strong teamwork among teachers across all grades and with other staff. Everybody is involved and connected to each other, including parents and members of the community, to identify problems and work on solutions.

5. *Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards* The planned and actual curriculum are aligned with the essential academic learning requirements (EALRs). Research-based teaching strategies and materials are used. Staff understand the role of classroom and state assessments, what the assessments measure, and how student work is evaluated.

6. *Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching* A steady cycle of different assessments identify students who need help. More support and instructional time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours, to students who need more help. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs.

7. *Focused Professional Development* A strong emphasis is placed on training staff in areas of most need. Feedback from learning and teaching focuses extensive and ongoing professional development. The support is also aligned with the school or district vision and objectives.

8. *Supportive Learning Environment* The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

9. *High Levels of Family and Community Involvement* There is a sense that all have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Families, businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

OSPI, Addressing the Achievement Gap: A Challenge for Washington State Educators (November 2002)

OSPI conducted this study with the goal to review and synthesize the current body of research in order to create a common understanding of the issues that must be addressed regarding the achievement gap. OSPI research staff used the following questions to guide their work:

- What is the nature of the achievement gap in Washington?
- What does the literature suggest are root causes and conditions that tend to perpetuate the gap?
- What promising steps can be taken toward closing the gap?

While noting that the achievement gap can be defined in different ways, this report focuses on the gap between white students and students of color and between students from more affluent backgrounds and their lower income counterparts.

Nationwide a large gap has remained relatively unchanged over the past decade. While substantial progress was made in the 1970's and 1980's toward closing the achievement gap, since 1992 the gap in performance between white and other students on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has remained about the same. Mirroring the national trend of the past decade, Washington assessment data show a relatively large and unchanged gap. While significant improvement has been seen in the test scores of minority students, the average rate of improvement among minorities has either been slower or not much better than that of white and Asian students.

The report identifies two overall reasons why the achievement gap persists. First, research has found that factors outside the classroom – such as economic, family, and personal characteristics – have a strong influence on achievement. Second, research has identified various school-related factors that can perpetuate the gap, such as less opportunity to learn, inadequate instruction and support, lower expectations from their schools and teachers, and cultural differences between family conditions and traditional school structure and expectations.

The report identifies many strategies for reducing and ultimately eliminating the achievement gap:

- Changed beliefs and attitudes
- Cultural responsiveness
- Greater opportunities to learn
- Effective instruction
- More family and community involvement

OSPI, Report to the Legislature: English-as-a-Second Language / Transitional Bilingual Program Funding Formula (January 1998)

The 1997 legislature proposed a new funding formula for the allocation of funds to school districts providing language instruction and assistance to students with limited English proficiency (LEP). As directed by the legislature, OSPI submitted this report on the new formula components.

Prior to the newly proposed funding formula, districts were given a flat per-pupil allocation for bilingual education. Under the proposed formula, districts would receive funding for their bilingual population based on two additional characteristics: a grade level "band" (K-5, 6-8, 9-12) and length of time in the program. Older students generate more funding, and as students remain in the program, they generate less funding. **OSPI does not recommend adopting this new formula** because it will negatively impact districts without providing any apparent benefit to students or improve their ability to succeed.

Current research. The length of time it takes bilingual students to reach proficiency in English (measured by reaching the 50th percentile on a standardized test) varies by student age and ranges from 5-10 years. However, differential funding is not supported by research as contributing to more rapid second language acquisition. If the legislature wants to implement differential funding, a more appropriate grouping would be grades K-3, 4-7, and 8-12, where grades 8-12 received the highest level of funding followed by K-3 and then 4-7.

Fiscal impact. Based on a survey of 151 school districts, the proposed funding formula would cost $33.8 million in FY99 compared to a cost of $33.4 million for the current funding forumula. Overall, districts gain an average of $12 per student, or 1.75% (with a total percentage difference for districts ranging from –3.1% to 4.8%).

District response. Districts responding to OSPI's survey also reported that the proposed funding formula would have a negative impact on districts and LEP programs and would not improve student performance:

The proposed formula would require extensive new record keeping and reporting (more specific data and monthly, rather than annual, reporting).

Districts do not consider grade level or time in the program as very influential in program costs.

The majority of districts, those that stand to gain funds and those that stand to lose funds, prefer the current funding formula to the proposed formula, noting that any additional funds some of them may receive would likely be consumed by the additional reporting requirements.

OSPI's recommendation. The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that ESL and transitional bilingual programs continue to be funded by an average per-pupil rate. Many transitional bilingual programs need improvement, and OSPI will work with districts to create a long-term improvement plan.

State Board of Education, Final Report on Validity and Reliability, Opportunity to Learn and Certificate of Academic Achievement (May 2004

This final report on Validity and Reliability Issues Related to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning and Washington Alternate Assessment System, System Capacity/Opportunity-To-Learn, Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) and Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) Graduation Requirement, represents the product of four years of work by the Washington State Board of Education. This report will not end the public dialogue on the issues. However, it is hoped by the Board that the report will be viewed as a positive contribution to the necessary debate on truly significant public policy issues.

ISSUE: Validity and Reliability Issues Related to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning. Regarding the technical validity and reliability of the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics: the State Board of Education finds that there is adequate and sufficient evidence that the high school WASL in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics is technically valid and reliable as a measure of student learning of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs – content standards).

ISSUE: Validity and Reliability Issues Related to the Washington Alternate Assessment System (WAAS): Regarding the technical validity and reliability of the high school WAAS in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science: the State Board of Education finds that the administration history of the portfolio-based WAAS (available to special education students with significant disabilities) is too early to make a fully evidenced-based judgment about its validity and reliability as a measure of student learning of the EALRs in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science.

ISSUE: System Capacity/Opportunity-To-Learn: The Legislature has begun to recognize the system costs of providing students the necessary opportunity-to-learn the EALRs before taking the high school WASL or WAAS. The Legislature is commended for this recognition, but is cautioned that it is tip-of-the-iceberg recognition. If the Legislature is truly committed to the public policy decision that was made in 1993 and ratcheted up in 2004 (requiring the CAA/CIA for graduation), then it must commit to investing the necessary fiscal resources to assure that every student receives what she or he needs, when she or he needs it, and how she or he needs it in order to maximize each student's successful learning as measured by the WASL and WAAS.

ISSUE: Certificate of Academic Achievement and Certificate of Individual Achievement Graduation Requirement: The State Board of Education neither affirms nor rejects the wisdom of the statutory policy making the CAA/CIA a high school graduation requirement. Whether or not there is adequate evidence to support use of the CAA/CIA as a graduation requirement is an issue to which the Legislature might have to legally respond in the future. If Washington State is to reasonably expect the performance outcomes it says it desires for all students, underinvestment of resources will undermine the capacity of the system to that end. Should the CAA/CIA graduation requirement be challenged in court, it is the State Board's view that certain systemic policies and programs need to be established (and in some instances funded), in order to best position the state for successful defense of the CAA/CIA graduation requirement policy. The CAA/CIA state graduation requirement will profoundly affect the life of every student, family, educator, administrator, and business in the state. As such, the 2005 budget session will be a benchmark measure of legislative fortitude to make sure that all necessary steps have been taken and resourced to yield a positive outcome for students in the Class of 2008 and beyond.

ISSUE: Perspective: Just 66% of pubic high school students are graduating "on time" in Washington. Can we do better? There is no option except to do better. Implementing a performance-based education system with a focus on continually improving student achievement means the state will always be engaged in the implementation process. Passage of 3ESHB 2195 was an important test of legislative resolve to continue moving forward with reshaping the public education system to meet the needs of its young people in this century. The 2005 biennial budget session likely will be the more important test of legislative commitment. Willingness to provide funds for intervention investments to support students who need additional help to meet the CAA/CIA graduation requirement will be a key barometer of legislative will and commitment to the

success of Washington State's education reform initiative. In the consideration of responding to this challenge, the Legislature is encouraged to embrace the perspective of "time to reach standard" rather than "ability to reach standard" in helping struggling students. Only through the continued collaborative efforts of all parties will the state fully realize the goal of basic education that was rewritten by the Legislature in 1993:

> "The goal of the Basic Education Act for the schools of the state of Washington… shall be to provide students with the opportunity to become responsible citizens, to contribute to their own economic well-being and to that of their families and communities, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives." [RCW 28A.150.210]

Professional Educator Standards Board, Math Teachers Count: Raising Teacher Knowledge and Skills – Raising Student Achievement (November 2004)

In the 2004 supplemental budget, the Legislature charged the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) with submitting a report regarding specific implementation strategies to strengthen mathematics initiatives by improving teacher knowledge and skill development. As they developed their recommendations, the PESB identified the following policy goals:

1. Ensuring that the knowledge and skill standards for prospective K-8, Middle-Level Math / Science (MLMS), and Secondary Math (Math) endorsed teachers are uniformly high and appropriate for them to help all students meet state standards.

2. Promoting program approval processes and policies that highlight exemplary practice, emphasizing accountability for results, and collect and report meaningful data for decision making.

3. Providing teachers delivering instruction in mathematics, both new and experienced, with the support and resources they need to respond to higher standards and curriculum changes for students.

4. Designing and implementing a new system by which the state sets standards and enhances access and opportunity for participation in high quality mathematics professional development equitably statewide.

5. Moving away from a "clock hour" based system of certificate renewal to professional growth plans that allow math teachers greater flexibility to participate in a wider range of professional development activities that are directly tied to school and district learning improvement goals.

To accomplish these goals, the PESB made the following recommendations:

1. OSPI's Professional Education and Certification division form a standards panel to review the revise the K-8, Middle-Level Math/Science (MLMS), and secondary Math (Math) endorsements and present their findings and recommendations for specific changes to the competencies to the PESB by September 2005.

2. Following review and revisions to the K-8, MLMS, and Math endorsements by December 2005, the PESB will require that the proposed testing vendor demonstrate alignment of the subject knowledge

tests for each of the three endorsements with the revised endorsement competencies in the request for proposal for the subject knowledge tests contract.

3. The Legislature charge the PESB with convening a cross-institutional task force to discuss program design and requirements related to prospective teachers achieving the revised K-8, MLMS, and Math endorsement competencies.

4. The State Board of Education and the OSPI Professional Education and Certification division work with deans and directors of colleges of education to develop a formal process, and any needed policy change to support that process, for incorporating greater subject-specific expertise into the 5-year endorsement program review.

5. OSPI's Professional Education and Certification division, with advice from PESB, review current measures of preparation program quality and complete development of a framework and components of an improved state-level assessment system for educator preparation by Fall 2005.

6. Continue legislative support for expansion of the Alternative Route Partnership Grant Program, with priority given to regions of the state without adequate access to alternative route preparation for prospective teachers in shortage areas, such as mathematics.

7. Legislative funding support for math mentor teachers, as well as State Board pursuit of potential incorporation of a math specialist endorsement within the state certification system.

8. OSPI to continue development and implementation of electronic/online certification system and central repository of educator credential data.

9. The Legislature authorize development of a new state system for approving and evaluating providers of inservice continuing education and professional development for award of clock hours for maintaining teacher certification. This would include authorization for OSPI and PESB to recommend the adoption of new standards and development and implementation of a web-based centralized professional development registry and evaluation system.

10. State Board of Education adopt rules allowing any interested school district, or approved private school in Washington to use Professional Growth Plans to renew/maintain certificates.

PESB, Great Teachers for All Students: Issues and Strategies for Washington State (March 2004)

The Professional Educator Standards Board is an advisory board to state policymakers. This report is a synopsis of a policy forum hosted by the PESB and the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. The three objectives of the forum were:

- Share information and expertise on three priorities of the PESB and the NCTAF;
- Provide an opportunity to share perspectives on teacher quality-related issues; and
- Develop solutions and next steps.

The three priorities, or goals, of the PESB on which this forum focused are:

- Promote the development of a state data system of the educator work force for improved decision making;
- Uphold high standards while streamlining certification processes; and
- Support the development of a new compensation structure based on performance and professional growth.

USING DATA TO INFORM DECISION-MAKING

The PESB questions whether Washington state is collecting the right data, and whether that data is useful for answering key questions about our education workforce. For example, is teacher quality distributed equitably across the state? In what districts and what disciplines is out-of-field teaching occurring? Where to we have high turnover and why? Are the programs and policies designed to recruit and retain teachers working?

Two University of Washington researchers shared findings from their analysis of teacher data collected by the State, which include:

- Overall, the state has an adequate supply of qualified teachers to fill most positions, but shortages do exist in some subject areas and geographic regions;
- Although more teachers are retiring, there are enough new teachers to take their places;
- High poverty districts tend to have less-experienced teachers and fewer teachers with advanced degrees; and
- Although retention rates statewide are high, they vary from 0-75 percent at the district level.

The UW researchers found that the state's existing data sources "stop short of capturing all that matters in providing important facts about the teacher workforce and teaching quality." Together with OSPI, the PESB plans to convene a workgroup to identify needs of a educator quality data system. They will convene key stakeholders, inform stakeholders of key research and best practices in Washington, and develop specific policy recommendations about data elements, use and management of data, and cost.

UPHOLDING STANDARDS AND STREAMLINING CERTIFICATION

A priority of the PESB is to uphold the highest possible standards while still allowing for maximum flexibility in the certification process. Three presentations on the forum focused on this dual priority:

- **Competency-based certification closer to home.** The current system of training teachers does not adequately meet needs in certain education topic areas or geographic locations, or for certain professionals trying to transition to teaching. Higher education institutions need a more strategic approach, such as the Alternative Routes Partnership Grant Program at Pacific Lutheran University. This competency-based system requires less face-to-face time and more classroom-based mentoring. Many students are able to get prior credit for existing competencies. PESB will pursue other performance-based models.
- **Highly qualified in the subjects they teach: an alternative route to adding subject endorsements.** Currently, the only way to add more subject matter "endorsements" to a teaching certification is

through approved teacher preparation programs. There is an increasing need, however, to provide more access to these programs as teachers are required under NCLB to demonstrate knowledge in the subject areas they teach. The PESB is outlining other routes they are developing to allow teachers to demonstrate they have met the standards for an additional subject endorsement, such as a knowledge test or classroom observations.

- **The professional growth plan: Vancouver's option for continuing education.** Continuing education and certification renewal in Washington have long been determined by clock hours and credits, but often those clock hours and credits do not meet teachers' needs. The Vancouver School District has adopted a professional growth model based in part on the work of Dr. Marilyn Simpson. In this model, teachers have the option of renewing their certificates through projects specific to their classrooms.

The PESB will continue efforts to "raise the bar and lower the barriers" around teacher recruitment and retention, teacher training specific to a topic or a location, and information about the state's certification process.

DEVELOPING A NEW CAREER AND COMPENSATION STRUCTURE FOR EDUCATORS

According to Allen Odden, a leading researcher on teacher compensation, Washington's teacher compensation system is not linked to actual teacher effectiveness. The current system, based on years of experience and education degrees, also offers nothing in terms of a career path for teachers since it does not recognize professional licensure. Odden recommends that Washington link pay increases to improvements in student learning. He also suggests including supplemental pay for teaching in subject areas or geographic areas where there are shortages. Not only are these changes desireable, but they are needed also to mitigate inequities in the current teacher compensation system (particularly around the Professional Certificate and post-baccalaureate certification programs). The PESB will continue to inform policymakers about the misalignment between the state salary allocation and the state's performance-based system of educator preparation.

CONCLUSION

In addition to the its own plans for continued work in these three priority areas, the PESB urges policymakers to support the following efforts:

- Expanding statewide the Alternative Routes to Teaching Partnership Grant Program;
- Continuing the study and development of a new career and compensation structure for educators;
- Developing and implementing an educator workforce data system;
- Implementing PESB recommendations for the Professional Certificate;
- Meeting NCLB requirements by facilitating teacher subject endorsements; and
- Expanding district pilots of professional growth plans for certificate renewal.

PESB, Getting and Keeping the Teachers We Need: Paying for What We Value (January 2003)

Together with staff from the WEA, OFM, and OSPI, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) convened a work group to study alternative models of teacher compensation. Teachers need to be paid more, and paid differently; they need a compensation structure that provides incentives aligned with new professional demands. The current compensation system does a poor job of attracting professionals to teaching, keeping teachers in the profession, and valuing professional capacity over classroom experience, and it conflicts with a new system of professional and personal growth. The PSEB developed this brief to encourage policymakers to consider different compensation models.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMPENSATION AND TEACHER SUPPLY

Compensation is a crucial factor in attracting and retaining teachers. In Washington, 11 percent of teachers leave the profession in the first year compared to 9 percent nationally. In a 1999 survey, beginning teachers cited "salary level" as the primary reason they might leave the profession within the first five years. Washington is also experiencing teacher shortages in specific subject areas, such as special education, math, physics, chemistry, and music, that may become more severe over the next five years. In order to attract and keep teachers in the future, Washington needs to focus on:

- Attracting teachers in subject areas and geographic regions experiencing shortages;
- Retaining teachers rather than losing them to better-paid careers;
- Providing career growth opportunities within teaching;
- Ensuring the most effective teachers get the toughest assignments; and
- Enhancing teachers' capacity to employ more effective practices.

THE RATIONALE FOR WASHINGTON'S CURRENT TEACHER COMPENSATION SYSTEM

Washington's salary allocation model, which is used for allocation purposes only, provides pay increments based on teacher's years of experience and education credits. Local school boards have the authority to negotiate local salary schedules, but they must stay within minimum and maximum salary requirements. The state salary schedule was put into place in the 1970's in response to various school funding lawsuits. The goal of the schedule was to equalize salary variability among districts; however, 34 districts are grandfathered in to use their own, generally higher, allocation rates. The state salary controls restrict districts' ability to vary from the schedule with their base salary contracts, but they can offer supplemental contracts for additional responsibilities and activities. One primary component of this is time, responsibility, and incentive pay (TRI), which can average over $5,000 per year, per teacher. TRI is locally-determined and funded yearly.

The two strengths of Washington's salary allocation schedule are that it is intentionally objective by recognizing only level of education and years of experience, and it gives districts equal ability to attract and hire experienced teachers. This system is also determined to be easy to administer and inexpensive to operate. Despite these positive aspects, the limitations of the system are significant and growing more problematic. The schedule does not consider cost of living differences between districts, it does not include incentives to recruit and retain highly-qualified teachers to hard-to-staff schools, and it is not aligned with a performance-based system of certification and professional growth.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE CURRENT COMPENSATION SYSTEM

There are two alternatives to supplementing or replacing single-salary schedules:

Knowledge- and Skills-based Pay, where compensation is tied to levels of certification, objective evaluation systems, demonstrated professional growth, career growth, increased responsibility, and/or professional achievements. According to the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), there are two critical principles on which any knowledge- or skills-based system must be based: clear, specific measurable skills that are related to needs of the school; and an objective, sound, and credible assessment system.

Differential Pay, which compensates for cost of living differences and other market-based factors and also provides additional pay in areas of high need (low-achieving or otherwise hard to staff schools). Some pay-related incentives states and districts are trying include: signing bonuses, higher salaries in subject areas with teacher shortages, housing subsidies, bonuses contingent on years of service, and higher pay for teaching in a low-performing school. One hazard of differential pay is that it may exacerbate competition among districts, which is one issue Washington's current system was designed to lessen.

ALIGNING COMPENSATION TO A PERFORMANCE-BASED SYSTEM OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Washington's emerging system of teacher preparation, certification, ongoing professional growth, and evaluation are all focused on demonstrating positive impacts on student learning. What is missing is a compensation system aligned to these new directions.

Changes in the professional development model. Washington still operates under a 150 hour, five year renewal cycle. With the emergence of the new competency-based system for teaching standards, however, a committee of educators is studying statewide use of approved professional growth plans as the means for certificate renewal. These plans would document coursework and other professional development activities that teachers propose for the purpose of maintaining their continuing certificates, and they would be negotiated between individual teachers and a school/district team to ensure that the plan supports district and school learning goals.

Changes in teacher evaluation. Knowledge- and skills-based pay systems rely on objective, reliable systems for evaluating teacher performance. Seven districts in the state are piloting a research-based model for teacher evaluation.

Next steps for Washington – Designing and implementing compensation reform. Nothing should be changed without much deliberation, thought, and buy-in. Successful development and implementation of new systems of compensation, according to CPRE, require the following elements:

1. Involvement of all key parties, especially teachers.
2. Broad agreement on desired education results.
3. Comprehensive evaluation systems.
4. Adequate, stable funding.
5. No quotas or limits on teachers' ability to move in pay system.

6. Positive relationships between management and labor, with shared goals.

7. Commitment, persistence, and a desire for continuous improvement.

The next step for Washington is a more in-depth study that addresses the following questions and issues:

1. To what degree do we modify the current salary allocation schedule versus adding on pay increments?

2. What does transition to a new system involve and how can we phase it in?

3. Should we consider first supporting a pilot implementation?

4. What are the budget implications?

5. How might this affect TRI dollars?

6. Can we use the existing TRI system, or is there a need for more local ability to negotiate district-specific pay structures?

7. How can the state support districts to make this successful?

8. What will a new system mean for educational staff associates?

9. How will successful change be measured?

10. Will pay differentials be used to create greater compensation equity, or to attract teachers to high-need areas?

PESB, Getting and Keeping the Teachers We Need: The Role of Alternative Routes (2003)

Washington is experiencing teacher shortages in specific teaching areas, such as special education, math, and science, and in specific geographic regions. The nature of this shortage requires a strategic approach that includes both recruitment and retention strategies. Expanding Washington's new alternative route programs is a key part of this strategy. The Alternative Routes Partnership Grant Program provides support for the formation of partnerships between school districts and higher education teacher preparation programs to offer one or more of three school-based alternative routes to teacher certification. Characteristics of the programs include:

- Field-based partnerships
- Performance-based mentored internships
- Teacher development plans
- High quality and quantity mentoring

As the first cohort of alternative route interns enter the classrooms, we have already learned a great deal about the strengths and weaknesses of the program:

- Demand far exceeds opportunities and funding support
- Interns are high caliber
- Programs tend to be more performance-based
- Greater geographic reach needed
- Some districts need greater assistance in providing components of alternative route programs
- Some higher education programs need more guidance and exemplary models to help them design and implement competency-based models
- Alternative route programs are cost-effective
- Alternative route programs can become increasingly self-sustaining

The PESB requests ongoing funding to expand and strengthen existing exemplary alternative route partnerships and also proposes the following next steps:

- Continue existing programs
- Expand to unserved geographic regions
- Increase number of interns
- Provide more technical assistance to districts
- Support articulation agreements between community college and teacher preparation programs
- Support competency-based higher education partnership programs that meed alternative route criteria
- Increase use of on-line and K-20 network
- Establish a 2-year employment commitment for all participating interns

For alternative route programs to be successful, they need to be part of larger, systemic efforts to ensure an adequate supply of well-qualified teachers. Other areas that need to be addressed include other recruitment efforts, increased retention, pay that recognizes past experience, and pay for teacher mentors.

OFM, K-12 Health Benefits Study (December 2004)

In the 2004 supplemental budget, the Legislature directed the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to contract for an evaluation of the costs and benefits of additional efforts aimed at encouraging K-12 employee collective bargaining units to elect coverage under public employee benefits board (PEBB) administered health plans. The study was conducted by Treinen Associates.

In surveying the current environment, the study found that:

- Enrollment of K-12 employees in PEBB programs is quite low (as of June 2004, 1,945 subscribers, or 1.6% of total K-12 employees).
- There are a variety of reasons that K-12 groups favor purchasing benefits at the local level over participating in state-administered PEBB plans.

- Currently, the K-12 and state employee benefit allocation rates are essentially the same. However, funds are allocated to school districts based on FTEs, while state employee benefit funds are allocated based on head count.
- Differences in the timing of benefit allocations between K-12 and state employees result in funding challenges for groups wishing to join PEBB.
- K-12 groups have wider variety of health plan benefit designs available to them compared with the two health benefit plan designs offered by PEBB.
- K-12 associations and labor unions play a significant role in collective bargaining, educating and influencing their members about benefit options.

The study described fifteen major obstacles that were identified for K-12 groups attempting to switch from their current health benefit plans to the PEBB. The report offers possible strategies to overcome or moderate these obstacles, should policy makers decide that bringing K-12 employees into PEBB is a state policy priority. The suggested strategies can be grouped into eight categories of action:

- Addressing funding issues and financial impacts (including incentives)
- Educating K-12 groups and employees by providing access to better benefits information
- Increasing flexibility of PEBB plan options
- Increasing responsiveness of PEBB to K-12 benefit issues
- Making PEBB plan prices more attractive
- Making PEBB plan networks more attractive
- Developing more plan design options within PEBB
- Reevaluating a system-wide solution

Before policy makers embark upon further evaluation of the merits of adopting any incentives for K-12 collective bargaining groups to join PEBB, it is suggested that they conduct a more thorough evaluation of the costs and benefits of such a policy change on the state, K-12 school districts, and K-12 employees. A high-level overview in this study found no compelling or immediate reasons to provide incentives for more K-12 participation in PEBB.

OFM, Review of K-12 Regional Cost Issues (December 2000)

This study responded to a statutory provision asking the Office of Financial Management to review K- 12 regional cost of living differences as well as methods to determine those differences. The study also discusses options for addressing cost of living difference and simulates two alternatives. The simulations include "order-of magnitude" fiscal impacts. The study does not offer a preferred option or consider all of the fiscal and policy implications of a cost of living allowance for K-12 personnel. The issues surrounding a cost of living allowance are complex and require additional data and further study.

Timely and accurate ***total cost of living data*** at the regional and local level are difficult to develop and are not generally available. Because relatively timely, accurate, and detailed ***housing cost*** data are available from commercial sources, housing data offer the best prospect for determining regional of cost of living allowances.

Since housing costs account for most of the differences in the cost of living among areas and regions in Washington, if a high-quality source of housing cost data, with sufficient geographic coverage, can be found, it can serve as a practical substitute for a total cost-of-living index by region.

Data available from the Economic Research Institute (ERI) on housing costs in 100 Washington cities and 39 counties was used in this study. The report noted that this data, while adequate for research and simulation purposes, is not adequate to support an actual system of cost allowances.

About two-thirds of teacher households in Washington are homeowner households. Using homeowner cost data from ERI for 100 Washington cities and 39 counties, estimated differences in annual homeowner costs by school district range from $8,698 in the Roosevelt School District in Klickitat County to $42,809 in the Mercer Island School District in King County. Estimated annual homeowner costs in the Coupeville School District (in Island County), at $16,092, represent the median teacher household homeowner cost for the 1998-99 school year.

The study included two simulations to provide "order-of magnitude" fiscal impacts. Under a homeowner allowance based on the school district with the lowest homeowner costs, the average annual allowance for each of nearly 56,000 FTEs in 1998-99 would be $8,178 or $455 million in the aggregate on an annual basis. Using an allowance based on the school district representing the median teacher household cost, the average annual allowance for the nearly 28,000 teachers (half of all teachers) receiving the allowance would be $3,902, or $108 million in the aggregate on an annual basis for the 1998-99 school year.

The study identified implementation and policy questions that must be addressed before any system of housing cost allowances is adopted, such as:

- What is the basis of a system of housing cost allowances? Would it be based on "equity?" Or would it be based on the need to reduce attrition and turnover? Or on both?
- If based on attrition and turnover, is there evidence that attrition and turnover are highest in the school districts with the highest living or housing costs? (Available job turnover data for school districts from the state Employment Security Department do not evidence a strong correlation between turnover and high housing costs).
- What is the most appropriate geographic unit upon which to differentiate pay based on the cost of housing?
- How will the workforce and employers respond to border effects of differentiated pay based on geographic boundaries? Should an allowance be based on place of work or place of residence?
- Should a housing allowance be a fixed dollar allowance for all eligible personnel in a district or region, or should the allowance be a percentage of the salary level?
- Would the housing allowance apply to all staff or only to certificated instructional staff?
- Should a cost of living adjustment be based on comparative expenses across school districts or regions, or on a comparison of private sector wages across regions, based on the assumption that the "market" price for workers reflects costs and benefits of living in different areas?

- Can quality of life issues, which affect location decisions of teachers, be factored into monetary compensation issues?
- If K-12 personnel receive housing cost allowances, should the same system be extended to other state employees?

The report also listed several possible options for addressing differences in housing costs, in addition to cost of housing allowances, such as:

- Signing bonuses for new teachers in qualifying districts to help pay the down payment on a house.
- Low-interest loans or mortgage subsidies for teachers in qualified school districts.
- Increasing local levy authority in qualifying school districts to allow those school districts to ask taxpayers for more money to fund pay raises to mitigate cost of living differences.
- Allow qualifying school districts to use capital bond proceeds to buy down mortgages.

Education Association Studies

WASA, Ample School Funding Project (2005)

The Board of Directors of the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) approved the Ample School Funding Project in November, 2003. The study is in response to school board members' and school administrators' frustration around unfunded state and federal mandates and subsequent unresponsiveness of the state legislature. The project involves three phases:

- A research study on the 5 parts of basic education, as defined by the 1978, 1983, and 1988 Doran court decisions;
- A costing out or adequacy study based on student achievement and accountability requirements; and
- A networking and communication strategic plan to garner support for ample school funding.

The technical analysis work was done in stages with one report issued for each of the 5 parts of basic education. The release dates and major findings from each report are listed below:

K-12 Pupil Transportation (July 2004):

- In 2002-03, school district total transportation operating expenditures were $321.1 million. The state allocation was $188.6 million, funding an average of 58.7% of district expenditures.
- Of the 290 school districts with transportation programs, 139 districts with 84% of the state's enrollment received state funding, which provides 40-70% of their expenditures.
- School district expenditure data do not differentiate between activities eligible and not eligible for state funding. A 16 district survey indicates non-eligible expenditures are less than 2 percent of total expenditures.

- Current transportation funding formula was adopted in 1983 and was developed jointly by OSPI and the Legislature. The main allocation factors are number of students transported and the straight-line distance they are transported.
- Districts complained to OSPI that they did not receive adequate funding to pay for 100% of their transportation needs; OSPI requested funds to complete a study of the funding formula, but the Legislature denied them.
- The current funding formula may be refined due to more current software products, modeling programs, and data collection systems.
- In 2005, the Legislature gave JLARC $125,000 to complete a study of pupil transportation; the study will evaluate the extent to which the funding formula captures the costs of providing pupil transportation for basic education.

Special Education (September 2004):

- Determination of the state's special education funding obligation was delegated in large part to school districts because school districts have the responsibility to prepare IEPs for special education students.
- The state's special education funding mechanism must reflect districts' actual costs, as close as is reasonably practicable, to the cost of properly formulated IEPs.
- The state funding formula, based on averages, by definition over-funds some and under-funds other districts. Accordingly, the state developed "safety net" funding for those districts that can prove they are underfunded in special education.
- The theory of the state's two-tier funding formula, created in 1995, is flawed because the state restricts access to safety net funds by requiring state maintenance of local funds, by limited legitimate expenditures for establishing eligibility, and by basing safety net award amounts on only high-cost students.
- In 2002-03, total special education program revenue from state and federal sources, including safety net awards, was $595.7 million; total expenditures were $775.9 million. Also, districts requested a total of $16.6 million in safety net funding and were awarded $11.9 million
- In 2005, the Legislature authorized JLARC to conduct a review of the special education excess cost accounting methodology and expenditure reporting requirements.

General Apportionment (January 2005):

- From 1965 to 1978, the state used a weighted pupil formula to allocate general apportionment funds.
- The 2004-05 basic education general apportionment staffing ratios are the same as those created in 1977.
- In 1992, the legislature redefined the state's basic education expectations but not the basic education funding formula.
- New standards from 1992 and 1993 education reform efforts are based on essential learning requirements, assessment, and accountability measures.

- Washington courts have ruled that special levies may not be used to offset the state's basic education obligation, but certain legislative actions have resulted in such use by districts.
- In 2002-03, school districts expended $4.9 billion in the general apportionment program. Of that amount, an estimated $698 million, or 14.2%, came from local funding sources equivalent to more than 61 percent of district special levy revenues.
- Washington spends only 89% of the national average per pupil; and, the state is also below the national average in beginning and average teacher salaries and has the fifth largest student-teacher ratio in the country.

Learning Assistance Program (April 2005):

- LAP is a program providing remediation assistance to students in grades K-12 not meeting standards on statewide assessments.
- In 2003-04, state LAP allocations were $64.3 million, or 1.2% of total state funds.
- Three main factors impact the adequacy of state LAP funding: the rigor of the state's educational standards; the adequacy of state funding of other basic and non-based education programs to meet the standards; and, the need for remediation services for students not able to meet the state's educational standards.
- The state has expanded who is served by LAP, but funding has been limited to dollars available rather than being based on need.
- The estimated state cost to maintain LAP for 2005-07 is $134.5 million; OSPI requested $190 million; and, the Legislature awarded an increase of $25 million.

Transitional Bilingual Education (May 2005):

- Washington's school districts are mandated to provide bilingual instruction to students whose primary language is other than English.
- This program requirement was enacted by the 1979 legislature but was not made part of basic education until the 1983 Doran decision.
- In 2003-04, state TBIP funds were allocated to each district based on $721 per eligible student. Determination of the funding rate per student was not based on a study of amounts needed.
- In 2003-04 the state allocated $50.8 million for TBIP; school districts expended $73.2 million (43% more than state funding). The additional funding was collected primarily through special levy revenue.
- Previous state studies of the TBIP focused on operations and not funding adequacy. The percent of special levy funding used to support TBIP exceeds that of all other basic education programs.

Many education associations in the state have formally agreed to support the Ample School Funding Project. John Myers, a national expert in school finance, also addressed WASA members regarding possible next steps. Some of his suggestions include:

- Today's base cost of education should reflect what is needed for a student with no special needs to meet standards in a district with no special circumstances.
- Adjustments can be made to the base cost for special education, at-risk, ELL, district size, and cost of living differences.
- To set the base cost, states can use professional judgment, best practices reviews, evidence-based examination, or statistical modeling.

Myers also gives examples of adequacy studies done in other states (MD, NY, NB, MT, KS and ND). And Myers explains the Washington Quality Education Model created by the Rainier Institute as an allocation model. The model identified an additional $1.7 billion needed to fully fund basic education.

Finally, WASA's leadership team has adopted a plan for 2005-06 that focuses on communication and networking strategies.

PTA, Washington State School Finances: Does Every Child Count? (March 2004)

The Washington State Parent Teacher Association undertook a K-12 finance study to examine equity and adequacy in Washington. The study was intended to provide a fresh look at Washington's school finance system and to review—in light of recent legislative and economic changes—whether it is still sufficient or whether some changes might be warranted. The study's major research questions and findings are summarized below.

Question: How fairly is school funding distributed across districts in Washington state?

> *Finding*: Based on national benchmarks for equity, the distribution of total funding across school districts in Washington state is generally fair and equitable. However, even with this favorable assessment, the study identified 17 districts with funding levels far below the average.

Question: Why do the 17 lowest-funded districts receive much less funding than the other districts in the state?

> *Finding*: The study identified some important factors, but did not reach definitive conclusions. This is the subject of further research by the PTA.

Question: To what extent is districts' school funding dependent on district wealth?

> *Finding*: School district funding in Washington state is not appreciably dependent on district wealth. The state finance system seems to have largely compensated for differences in district tax bases.

Question: What is the estimated cost of funding schools to a level adequate to meet state education standards?

> *Finding*: The study considered two different methodologies for quantifying an adequate level of funding and estimated that additional funding requirements could range from $179 million to $2.1 billion per year.

Question: Which districts face the greatest risk for not ensuring their high-needs students attain the state's academic standards?

> *Finding*: Of the 174 districts in the study, the study identified 17 that were considered most at risk for not ensuring all of their high-needs students attain the state's academic standards. These 17 at-risk districts have below-average funding and above-average rates of students with extraordinary needs and above-average rates of students who did not meet 4th grade WASL test standards in school year 2001-02.

The Washington PTA Legislative Assembly has placed a priority on a state education funding study in the 2004 and 2005 Legislative Sessions. Based on the analysis in this report, the PTA recommends that any study of how the state funds education should do the following:

1. Develop a base spending per pupil level that would ensure the average child could achieve the state's education standards.

2. Determine the additional amounts of money needed for students whose extraordinary needs require more resources than the average student.

3. Consider the feasibility of using a price adjustment for all dollar figures to ensure comparable spending power across all areas of the state.

Rainier Institute, What Will It Take? (March 2003)

The Rainier Institute initiated the "What Will It Take" project to determine the resources required to guarantee all Washington students a quality education. Adequacy was defined as providing an amount of funds sufficient for schools to enable all students – or at least all but the most profoundly challenged – to meet federal , state, and district proficiency standards within the context of a high-quality overall education. The work groups and Steering Committee engaged in a four-step process to create the Washington Quality Education Model (WQEM):

1. Develop a vision of a quality education

2. Identify the elements and components of a quality education

3. Specify the indicators of school quality

4. Designate performance measures and standards that could be used to determine if schools met quality expectations

The study was intended to identify a level of funding for public schools, but did not address how those funds would be distributed to schools nor did it distinguish between state and local funding sources.

This project describes a hypothetical program of instruction in three prototype schools, which are a reflection of best educational practice and what is known about how to improve schooling based on the input of the

steering committee and work groups. Based on the prototype schools defined in this report, the definition of adequate funding was $2.1 billion per year above the existing funding level.

The report identified data sources to measure performance of schools: WASL assessments, parent satisfaction surveys, dropout rates, college attendance rates, employer surveys, reports of harassment or intimidation of students, measures of parent and community involvement and satisfaction.

The report made recommendations on the next steps to implement this model:

1. Assign responsibility to a commission to manage the WQEM
2. Develop the data sources necessary to track the effects of adequate funding on school operations
3. Constitute a blue-ribbon task force to examine school funding sources and distribution

League of Education Voters, Realities of Education Funding in Washington State: Why Schools Are Still Struggling After the Passage of Two Education Initiatives (December 2002)

Ten years ago, with the passage of the Education Reform Act (ESHB 1209), Washington created the promise that all children in Washington State would achieve at high levels. We committed to creating a school system in which students, teachers and schools are held to high standards of achievement. We redefined what it means to be a successful learner, moving from an input model, where a diploma was based on getting credits, to an output model, where student performance must be proven and measured against rigorous statewide standards.

Since then, adequately funding schools has been a recurring issue. Many thoughtful observers point out that schools don't seem to be losing money. In fact, overall state spending for K-12 education has increased over the past decade. However, school officials throughout Washington continue to state that they are forced to make cuts to budgets and programs. There is a disconnect between the perceptions of school funding and the realities of school funding.

There are many questions and no simple answers to the complex issue of school finance. This report seeks to answer one of those questions: *Why are schools struggling even after the passage of two education initiatives?*

The most basic answers to this question are:

- more students with greater needs
- higher expectations
- more costs and less buying power

K-12 enrollment has increased since 1993, adding 100,000 students to the system. Because the bulk of state funding for schools is based on the number of students in the system, with more children comes more money. While this represents increased overall funding, this money is not truly new investment; it does not address new needs, nor does it keep pace with the rising costs of simply maintaining service levels.

In fact, when measured on a per-student basis, state funding lags behind inflation by $535 per-student since 1992-93 (based on Seattle/Tacoma/Bremerton CPI, which represents 60% of all K-12 students). This loss against inflation has meant that spending power has decreased, even though there appears to be more money available to schools.

At the same time, the student body has grown more challenging: there have been increases in the number of children with special education needs, children living in poverty, and children learning English. Despite these increased needs, there have not been significant increases in funding to support them. This report documents changes in K-12 spending in Washington over time compared with the national average, the percentage of the state budget spent on K-12 programs, local levy expenditures, special education spending, teacher salaries in Washington compared to the nation and western states, and school construction funding.

Findings from these analyses include:

- By 2000-2001, Washington K-12 spending had dropped below the national average, to 91.7%
- Although dollars going to schools have increased over the past decade, inflation erases those gains.
- K-12's share of the entire state operating budget declined from nearly 29 percent in the 1991-93 biennium when education reform was enacted, to 25.6 percent in 2001-2003.
- The increasing dependence on local levies is significant because of the inequitable nature of the levy system.
- Average teacher salaries in Washington are below the national average. In fact, of the western states (California, Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Hawaii), only Idaho has lower beginning salaries than Washington.
- School districts are required to meet the special needs of each child, regardless of cost.
- State aid for school construction has been declining over the past decade.

WSSDA, Closing the Achievement Gap (November 2002)

The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) created an Ad Hoc Achievement Gap Task Force in January 2001, which was charged with accomplishing the following:

- Assess the achievement gap problem
- Identify research, initiatives and other actions being taken by a variety of agencies and institutions addressing this issue
- Based on research, catalog school board policies, initiatives and actions that have contributed to ongoing success in reducing or eliminating the performance disparity among minorities or children in poverty
- Drawing on the Task Force members' talents and abilities, and such external resources as may be available, develop and report on best practices, model policies, or other school board actions that WSSDA and its members can implement to address the achievement gap issue

The report documents the achievement gap and identified nine key policy issues. In the section on each policy issue, the report provides background information, lists questions to guide the policy discussion, makes policy recommendations and documents what school districts are doing in this area. The key policy areas are:

1. Allocation and Alignment of Fiscal Resources
2. Quality Teachers and Assignment of Qualified Staff to Low-Achieving Students
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Cultural Competence
5. Time and Opportunity to Learn
6. Learning Environment
7. Readiness Gap and Early Intervention
8. Parent Involvement and Community Collaboration
9. Assessment and Accountability

The report includes 46 policy recommendations. Below is a sampling of those recommendations:

- Complete an evaluation of current policies and program intended to address needs of underachieving students and determine whether current resources are producing the desired benefits.
- Base resource allocation decisions on a well thought out strategic plan for closing the achievement gap, and target resources to meet the specific gap closing goals of the plan.
- Implement policies directing the superintendent to develop plans that move teachers to positions so they are teaching in their areas of endorsement or areas of expertise. Assist teachers in acquiring endorsements and training for assignments where they are needed.
- Develop recruitment programs that include specific and concerted efforts to attract and place highly qualified minority teachers.
- Implement policies that provide for a rigorous curriculum for all students.
- Review the district's program structure and staffing for English language learners to determine its alignment with best practices and implement needed program changes with a focus on reducing ESL pull-out as the model of instruction.
- Develop and adopt policies that express the board's philosophy about equity and cultural competence. Affirm the board's philosophy about equity and excellence through a statement of core beliefs that is posted in all schools. Be explicit in the policy about undoing racism.
- Provide for and support ongoing professional development to ensure that staff are culturally competent and hold high expectations for all students.

- Develop and adopt policies that direct the resource of time to closing the achievement gap, including a clear focus on using extended time effectively based on assessment of students' needs. Allocate resources for remediation and acceleration of students' annual growth targeted to students in the lowest quartile
- Track discipline reports and analyze discipline data to determine if patterns exist that reveal differences in discipline along racial, cultural, and socio-economic lines. Revise policies and/or procedures and provide staff training to make needed changes based on findings.
- Implement policies that require early assessment of reading and mathematics, with intervention programs aligned to reading and math targets for all students who have not met the necessary level of reading and math readiness.
- Develop policies that create clearly articulated practices between elementary schools and preschools, child care agencies, and family organizations that support readiness to learn.
- Consistently use a variety of forms and means of communication to parents and the community to ensure that communication is provided to reach parents who do not speak English.
- Develop and adopt policies that require schools to measure the growth of students from their individual starting places but set goals that assure that each child reaches standard.
- Establish measurable goals for closing the achievement gap for each school and for the district as a whole and report progress to the public on a regular basis.

Washington Afterschool Network, Afterschool in Washington: A Smart, Strategic Investment (January 2005)

Recent research confirms what our own observations have been telling us for years: an investment in afterschool programs is an investment in children's success. In addition to providing safe learning environments for our kids, investments in afterschool programs yield enormous benefits in public safety, youth risk reduction, economic development, and school success. Cost benefit analyses show that every dollar invested in afterschool programs can represent potential savings to taxpayers in the range of $8 - $12.

The Washington Afterschool Network, led by School's Out Washington, prepared this report at the request of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. For seven months in 2004, School's Out Washington gathered input from parents, young people, school staff (including teachers), afterschool program staff, policymakers, business leaders and community leaders to determine what Washington needs to do to turn the great potential of afterschool programs into reality.

This report identifies areas where the Washington State Legislature can have the most strategic impact on supporting children's success by improving afterschool programs. With a biennial investment of $5 million in 2005-07, Washington lawmakers would set into motion the following benefits for our children and our future:

1. Create 50 additional afterschool programs in Washington State to make spaces available to approximately 9,000 additional kids.

   Almost 9,000 children and youth will have access to safe, quality afterschool program that support

academic achievement. New programs will be geared to serve groups who are currently underachieving in Washington's schools: children who are low income, of color, and/or immigrants or refugees. The 2005 biennial budget request for creating 50 new afterschool programs is $3.75 million.

2. To ensure high quality programs that support school success, provide training and professional development opportunities for Washington's afterschool program staff.

   The number one factor necessary for quality afterschool programming is well-trained staff. This requires quality training programs for the people who are committed to a career working with kids in afterschool programs. The 21st Century Community Learning Center programs have shown that high quality programs can help children and youth achieve academically, but only if staff have training and support. The 2005 biennial budget request for ensuring an adequate level of training and professional development for afterschool staff is $500,000.

3. Support statewide afterschool intermediary organizations to ensure economies of scale for supporting afterschool programs.

   Funding in this area will improve afterschool programs by supporting intermediary organizations that provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, training, and advocacy, and that help programs access all available funding streams. The 2005 biennial request for adequate support for the afterschool infrastructure is $500,000.

4. Increase public awareness about the benefits of afterschool programs.

   A public awareness campaign increases the chances that state investments will be matched by private and corporate funding and may contribute to increased citizen support for afterschool programs. Given the many compelling reasons for children and youth to participate, parents, schools, and policymakers need to understand the benefits of programs and the need for good afterschool programs for all young people. The 2005 biennial budget request for development of a public awareness campaign is $250,000.

Research Organization Studies

CSTP, Teacher Retention and Mobility, A Look Inside and Across Districts and Schools in Washington State (March 2005)

This report examines teacher retention and mobility in Washington's teaching force at state, district, and school levels during a recent five-year period (1998-99 and 2002-03). It provides data about overall retention patterns across the state, with a more intensive look at 20 districts. The 20 districts selected represent the range of district size, poverty level and regions of the state, and include many of the largest districts. The report answers the following five questions:

1. What percentage of Washington teachers stay in the same school, move to another school or district, or leave the Washington education system after five years?

2. How do districts differ in the number of teachers who stay at the same school, move within the district or to another district, or exit the system over a five-year period? To what extent do schools within the same district have similar retention rates?

3. Do teachers of varying experience levels, ages or ethnicity stay, move or leave the system at different rates?

4. How is teacher retention or mobility related to student poverty, race or performance on state assessments?

5. What are the retention and mobility patterns for school principals? Are there differences in retention between elementary, middle school and high school principals?

STATEWIDE PATTERNS OF TEACHER RETENTION

When examining data for all teachers in Washington state in 1998–99, the researchers found that five years later…

- ...58 percent remained as classroom teachers at the same school.
- ...14 percent moved to another school in the same district.
- ...9 percent moved to work in another school district.
- ...20 percent left the Washington education system.

These statewide statistics show that the actual "drain" on the teacher workforce is considerably less than is often believed, and that the picture in Washington state is not necessarily the same in comparison with other states, or the national profile. In short, the findings dispel some important myths about the state's teaching workforce:

- Myth 1: Half of Washington's teachers leave the profession within the first five years. Not so, the actual figure is closer to a quarter of the teacher workforce.
- Myth 2: Washington districts are losing many teachers to other districts. Teacher mobility inside a district is greater than movement to other districts. Across a five-year period, less than 10 percent of a district's workforce, on average, has gone to another district.
- Myth 3: Washington is losing a disproportionate number of teachers from the workforce. Once again, this appears not to be the case. One-fifth of all teachers left the Washington system after five years. Easily half of the "leavers" are retirees, and some of the others may have left only temporarily (e.g., to raise a family).

RETENTION AND MOBILITY ACROSS AND WITHIN DISTRICTS

A school-by-school examination inside 20 districts reveals sizeable differences with respect to the rates at which teachers are retained in the same school—or somewhere within district boundaries.

- Districts differ in the extent to which their teachers stay at the same school after five years.

- Generally speaking, teachers move more often between schools within the same district than between districts.
- The largest urban districts have the lowest rates of movement outside the district.
- The larger the district, the greater the amount of movement from one school to another within the district.
- Despite these differences, the general pattern of retention and mobility found statewide holds true for districts. With few exceptions, the greatest percentage of teachers remain at their school, a smaller percentage leave the system, an even smaller percentage move within the district, and finally the smallest percentage switch districts.

RETENTION AND TEACHERS BY EXPERIENCE, AGE AND ETHNICITY

The characteristics of the teachers themselves—in particular, their level of experience, age and ethnicity—make a difference in whether the teachers stay, move or leave the profession.

- The most and least experienced teachers have lower retention rates in the same school after five years than their colleagues in the middle range of experience.
- The largest districts in the state do not have a disproportionate number of inexperienced teachers in their workforce, contrary to popular perceptions.
- Some districts, especially the larger ones, witness greater movement among novice teachers than other districts.
- Nearly half of all teachers who leave the Washington system are probably leaving due to retirement.
- Overall, teachers of color are retained at the same school after five years at approximately the same rates as White teachers, with the exception of African American teachers whose retention rates are slightly lower.

TEACHER RETENTION IN RELATION TO SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE

In seven large districts, teacher retention, the school's student characteristics, and measures of student learning are related to one another. Most noticeably in these districts,

- Teacher retention is related to the composition of the school's student population—in particular to the poverty level and racial make-up of students. Schools serving a greater number of students in poverty retain fewer of their teachers after five years. Schools with a greater percentage of White students tend to retain a greater percentage of their teachers at the same school after five years.
- In a mutually reinforcing pattern, school poverty, retention and school performance are linked to one another. Poverty rates are strongly associated with student performance. Even though the overall pattern between retention and poverty is generally similar in most of the seven largest districts in the sample, the strength of the relationship varies across the districts.
- The link between poverty, teacher retention and student performance is not largely or uniquely an urban phenomenon. There is evidence of this relationship in large suburban districts as well.

RETENTION OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

The analyses reveal that over the five-year period,

- School principals are more likely to move than teachers, though they typically do so within their own districts.
- Retention rates for principals at elementary, middle and high schools are similar in most cases.
- Principal stability in schools has some bearing on teacher retention. To some extent, the more principals a school had over the five year period, the lower the retention of teachers.

WHAT LEADERS AND POLICYMAKERS CAN LEARN FROM THIS ANALYSIS

The pattern of overall stability in the state's teaching force should underscore the importance of supporting currently employed teachers. In particular, the report recommends that state leaders should:

- Recognize that recruitment efforts should be targeted in specific ways. Statewide attention is still needed in shortage areas (e.g., math, special education and bilingual education) and with respect to recruiting teachers of color.
- Enhance support mechanisms for those now in the classroom. Given the relative stability, efforts to provide effective and needed professional development and other types of support for teachers' work are likely to have a lasting impact.
- Focus more attention on teachers in their early years of teaching. The frequent movement of novice teachers suggests that more may be at work than a natural process of "settling into" a new profession.

For district leaders, the pattern of retention and mobility is more immediate and likely to be a unique reflection of local or regional conditions, school-level dynamics, and district policies. At the district level, the challenge is to analyze where the district's schools are succeeding at retaining teachers and where they are not, how these retention patterns map on to the relative poverty level of student populations within the district, and what the consequences are for student performance. In particular, district leaders can:

- Commit to understanding the specific longitudinal picture of teacher retention and mobility for all schools within the district.
- Adopt a data-based approach to examining district policies, practices and working conditions that influence teacher retention at the school level.
- Implement strategies for enhancing teacher support at the school level.

CSTP, Who's Teaching Washington's Children? What We Know – and Need to Know – About Teachers and the Quality of Teaching in the State (2003)

This report provides Washington educators and policymakers with a portrait of the state's current teacher workforce. As a starting point for understanding the nature and distribution of the state's teaching force, the researchers have chosen to focus on indicators for which data are currently available in Washington state. The report is organized around three central themes: characteristics of the current teacher workforce, teacher supply and demand, and retention of teachers.

TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS: WHO IS IN THE STATE'S CURRENT TEACHER WORKFORCE?

Washington's teacher workforce consists of over 55,000 classroom teachers. In 2000, the majority were white (93 percent), had five or more years of experience (75 percent), held a master's degree or higher (54 percent) and were over 40 years of age (64 percent). While an examination of aggregate, statewide statistics tend to reflect little variation in the workforce, differences do exist, particularly at the district and school levels. There are few clear and consistent patterns when examining teacher characteristics by district size or region of the state. However, data in 2000 indicates that districts serving students with the highest percentages of students in poverty tend to have teachers with less experience and fewer advanced degrees than other districts in the state. Based on proxies such as level of education and certification status, Washington's teachers hold similar qualifications to teachers nationally. Virtually all Washington teachers possess at least a bachelor's degree and slightly over half, 54 percent, hold an advanced degree (master's degree or higher). Few teachers in Washington hold emergency or conditional certificates.

TEACHER SUPPLY AND DEMAND: DO WE HAVE ENOUGH TEACHERS TO MEET THE STATE'S NEEDS?

Based on what we can know from existing data, the overall available teacher workforce statewide currently is sufficient to fill most positions. However, the state may experience shortages in certain subject areas and in particular regions of the state. Statewide student enrollment is projected to continue to grow through 2012, but at a much slower rate than the previous decade. While the number of teachers eligible to retire in the near future is expected to increase, there is also a sizeable group of experienced educators to take their place in subsequent years. However, the ethnic profile of the state's workforce is not particularly well-matched with the student population. As the student population has grown ever more diverse, the rate of growth for teachers of color has been much slower.

RETENTION: HOW LONG DO TEACHERS STAY IN THEIR SCHOOL OR DISTRICT?

Patterns of retention for Washington's teachers resemble national trends. New teachers leave at higher rates than those who remain in the profession through the middle career years. Approximately 72 percent of beginning teachers in 1996 were still in the Washington education system five years later. Districts differed considerably, however, in the extent to which their teachers moved among schools, left for other districts or private schools, or exited the Washington education system. Of those who remained, 93 percent were still classroom teachers five years later.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The goal of this work is to provide accurate and useful information about the teaching force that can inform policymaking. A central question for policy makers is: what can and should be done to enhance the quality of teaching, the teaching force and support for teachers' work in pursuit of high learning standards for all students? Even given its limitations, the current analysis contains some important messages for policymaking. These concern, first, the meaning of a relatively stable, well-educated teaching force; second, the often overlooked inequities in the distribution of teachers at the school level; and third, the importance of good information for setting and adjusting policies that relate to teachers, teaching and support for teachers' work.

Given the relative stability of the state's teacher workforce, policy aimed at supporting teachers presently in the classroom may be an important place to focus energy and resources.

While all indicators point to an adequate overall supply of teachers, certain subject matter fields and regions of the state may consistently face a shortage of qualified candidates. As elsewhere in the nation, there is an

important concern about the distribution of teaching talent between hard-to-staff schools and schools viewed as more desirable places to teach. State policy has not addressed the issue, leaving the question of how to equitably distribute teaching talent as a matter for local districts to address. Improving statewide capacity to collect and analyze data regarding the teaching force can help address a number of unanswered questions. Among these questions are matters pertaining to attracting, rewarding, and retaining teachers; developing support for teachers' professional learning; and capturing how teachers are responding to reform in their classroom practice. These issues are particularly important to examine in schools that are high-poverty, hard-to-staff or low-performing.

UW Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Washington's Initiative 728: Examining the First Year of Implementation (February 2003)

This report examines district expenditures of Initiative 728 (I-728) funds during the first year of the initiative's implementation (2001-02). The study has two components: 1) an analysis of I-728 expenditure data for 295 districts, and 2) an examination of district decision making regarding the use of I-728 funds in a sample of nine districts.

STATEWIDE I-728 EXPENDITURES

An analysis of expenditure data provided by 295 districts reveal that in 2001-02, I-728 funds were allocated as follows:

53.3% for class size reduction (25.0% for grades K-4 and 28.3% for 5-12)

11.2% for extended learning

14.3% for professional development

1.1% for early assistance for pre-kindergarten

3.7% for facilities improvements

2.0% for other use

14.4% reported as carryover.

Differences exist when analyzing expenditure patterns by district size, region and poverty, including the following:

- Districts with fewer than 1,000 students spent proportionately more on extended learning for students and for early assistance for pre-kindergarten
- Districts with at least 20,000 students and districts with fewer than 1,000 students spent proportionately more on K-4 class size reduction
- Eastern Washington districts spent proportionately more on facility improvements and early assistance for pre-kindergarten

- Districts in ESD 121 (Central Puget Sound) spent proportionately more on professional development
- Districts with 76-100% of students receiving Free and Reduced Price Lunch spent proportionately more on extended learning for students and less on K-4 class size reduction
- Districts with more than 50% of students receiving Free and Reduced Price Lunch spent proportionately more on facility improvements

INSIGHTS FROM CASE STUDIES

The analysis of I-728 expenditures in the nine sample districts reflects a finding that is consistent with the statewide analysis. In both the statewide and the sample district analysis, a wide variation in I-728 expenditures is noted. In the sample districts, spending on class size reduction ranged from 0% to 69.5% of districts' total allocation in 2001-02. Spending on extended learning for students ranged from 0% to 41.4%, while spending on professional development ranged from 0% to 41.7%. This indicates a broad array of uses of I-728 funds, and data from the case study visits indicate that districts spent considerable time and effort in deliberating about the most appropriate uses for the money. Other observations which emerged from the case study work include:

1. Class size reduction was a focal point of discussion,
2. Data and research played a major role in shaping decisions,
3. I-728 funds boosted district capacity to implement reform strategies,
4. Community involvement in decision-making about I-728 varied, and
5. Districts are concerned about the availability of funds in subsequent years.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This initial look at I-728 expenditures suggests at least four policy-related issues for consideration.

1. I-728 spending patterns indicate that district needs are highly variable. This variation might suggest that districts need flexibility regarding the use of funds, and that when flexibility is provided, districts will take the opportunity to tailor their spending in areas they believe will have the greatest impact.
2. The case study analysis indicates that districts do make use of research and data to inform their decisions about resource allocation, especially when the necessary information is made readily accessible to districts.
3. Local accountability for decisions increased in districts that embraced the requirement to engage in public discussion of specific resource allocation strategies.
4. The I-728 expenditure database itself might potentially serve as a useful tool, as districts might benefit from examining the full array of choices which were made during the first year of implementation of the initiative.

It is too early to gauge how these expenditures are related to changes in student achievement. It is also important to note that this look at expenditure patterns in 2001-02 is not necessarily predictive of the patterns that may occur in subsequent years.

Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), How Within-District Spending Inequities Help Some Schools to Fail (2004)

This paper focuses on one aspect of district spending ambiguity, namely, differences in per pupil spending masked by teacher salary cost averaging. It shows how an often-discussed phenomenon – that schools serving poor children get less qualified teachers than schools in the same district serving more advantaged children – is hard-wired into district policy. It profiles budget layering that is then created in attempts to remedy these unacceptable consequences. It also shows how more open funding and accounting practices can help re-sort the most capable teachers so that schools serving poor students can become better staffed.

This paper is the result of five years' study of school district budgets. Researchers assembled real-dollar budgets for schools from the ground up. This involved identifying the schools to which personnel (administrators and teachers) were assigned and calculating the true dollar cost of employing those individuals, based on their actual salaries and benefit rates. This approach gets results that differ strongly from published district budgets, which assume that all staff members of a given type (for example, teachers, principals) cost the same. The data presented in this report reflect actual salary costs of certificated teachers at schools in four districts that cooperated with the researchers: Baltimore City Schools, Baltimore County Schools, Cincinnati Public Schools, and Seattle Public Schools.

In each district, specific types of schools routinely received fewer teacher salary dollars than the official district budget claimed. In each city, high-poverty, low-performing schools were staffed with teachers whose salaries were lower than the average. In Seattle, salary differences also showed up when comparing schools in different parts of the district. Teachers in elementary schools in the district's wealthier Northeast zone averaged salaries over $41,000, while teachers in the Southeast zone earned an average of $37,670.

The report concluded that equalizing per pupil spending within districts is necessary, but probably not sufficient. Districts that equalized real-dollar spending among their schools would still find that schools serving poor students had trouble attracting their share of the best-trained and most productive teachers. While these schools might benefit from having extra funds to spend on smaller class sizes or better technology, they might still be short of teachers who can set the tone for a school and help younger teachers learn their trade. Districts should monitor the distribution of teacher talent within the district and add financial incentives to influence the distribution if need be.

CRPE, Closing the Achievement Gap in Washington State: Holding Schools Accountable for Equity (September 2002)

This report attempts to take a fresh look at the data from the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in order to provide practical information for both educators and policy makers. Specifically, this analysis differs from most previous studies in that it uses scale scores rather than simply "percentage meeting standard;" analyzes data on both individual and building levels, since research has indicated that different groups of students perform quite differently in different educational settings; and displays the data in a

number of different ways designed to clarify the nature and direction of the gaps that exist and their relationship to known demographic characteristics of students and their schools.

Most reports of WASL scores only identify what proportion of students meet a standard. They do not distinguish students who are just below the standard from those far below it. Scale scores tell us, for students who did not meet the standard, whether they are close to or far from attaining it. All 4th, 7th and 10th grade students tested in reading and mathematics between 1998 and 2001 were included in this study of the achievement gap in Washington State public schools. The most significant findings of this study include the following:

- The scores of white and Asian/Pacific Islander students are very similar across grades and subjects, while the scores of American Indian/Alaska Native, African American and Hispanic students follow a similar pattern. There are, in effect, two groups of students in the public schools: white/Asian and nonwhite (American Indian/Alaska Native, African American, and Hispanic.)
- The achievement gap between nonwhite and white/Asian students in Washington's public schools is significant. The difference in scale points on the WASL ranges on average from 24 to 38 points in mathematics and from 12 to 19 points in reading. These are considered medium to large gaps.
- The distribution of scale scores in mathematics and reading indicate that nonwhite students peak at a lower point on the scale; in other words, a disproportionate number earn scores in the lower ranges of the scale.
- Nonwhite scores have increased somewhat more than white/Asian scores since the beginning of testing, but these increases are about half of what would be necessary to close the gap in the next five years, and only then if white/Asian scores increased at a much slower rate. In fact, it would be necessary for the average scale scores of American Indian/Alaska Native, African American and Hispanic students to increase from 80-109% of a standard deviation to close the gap by 2007. This is a formidable task.
- Students are not evenly distributed across school types in Washington State. Nonwhite students tend to be educated disproportionately in either high poverty rural or small town settings or in high poverty big or midsize city areas. Over 75% of students in Washington public schools are white and most schools in the state are predominantly white, but nonwhite students are more likely than white students to attend either majority nonwhite or mixed race schools. In general, the achievement gaps are more pronounced in these majority nonwhite or mixed race schools. However, there is no clear pattern of cause-and-effect in building type or locale. Additional individual and building- level data are necessary to assess the contribution of various student and school factors to achievement and the achievement gap in Washington.
- Seventh grade test scores in both mathematics and reading evidence anomalies that might have more to do with the test itself than with the students taking it. The pattern of achievement within both white/Asian and nonwhite students is different from (in some cases, radically different from) what would be expected given performance at both the 4th and 10th grade levels. These anomalies should be studied by testing experts to assess the source and effect of these differences.

EXPLAINING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP: A COMBINATION OF FACTORS

A critical review of the national research literature reveals there is no simple explanation for the achievement gap; rather, a complex combination of home, school, and societal factors contribute to the gap.

WASHINGTON: EQUITABLE ACCESS TO LEARNING?

According to the limited data and research available, low- income students and students of color in Washington State do not have equal access to the opportunity to learn. The educational resources required for success are not equally distributed.

Districts with the highest child poverty rates and largest percentages of students of color have fewer state and local dollars to spend per student compared with districts with the lowest poverty rates and percentages of students of color.

Low- income and minority students in Washington do not have equal access to well-prepared and qualified teachers. Thirty-two percent of classes in secondary schools with high percentages of low-income students are taught by teachers lacking a major in their field compared to 23% in schools with low percentages of low- income students. In schools with high percentages of students of color, 28% of classes are taught by teachers without a major in their field compared to 24% in schools with low percentages of students of color.

Not all Washington students have equal access to challenging coursework and effective instructional practices. Only 15% of African Americans, 15% of Native Americans, and 13% of Hispanics completed 8th grade algebra, a class that often functions as a gatekeeper to more advanced coursework. In contrast, 28% of white students and 31% of Asian/Pacific Islander students completed 8th grade algebra.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The achievement gap can be closed, but not with quick fixes. Closing the gap is a complex task that requires multiple, simultaneous, coherent, and long-term efforts that target school and societal issues. Responsibility must be shared by policymakers, educators, community leaders, parents and students. State policy should be designed with educational equity in mind from the start. The following list identifies promising school strategies for closing the achievement gap.

1. Expand access to preschool.
2. Fund schools equitably by addressing inequities in funding between and within districts.
3. Staff low-performing schools with well-qualified and experienced teachers.
4. Ensure all students equal access to a challenging curriculum.
5. Reduce school and class sizes in low-performing schools.
6. Enhance state, district and school staff capacity for school improvement focused on equity.
7. Support research investigating the causes of and solutions to closing the achievement gap.

HOLDING SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE FOR EQUITY: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

School accountability should be viewed as a reciprocal relationship; the state cannot simply demand performance from its schools and districts, but rather must provide them with the resources and freedom of action to improve instruction. The following recommendations identify key features of an equity-centered system of school accountability.

- Produce and use data in ways that increase awareness of persistent low achievement.
- Measure improvement and growth over time.
- Measure gaps in achievement as well as changes in overall achievement.
- Ensure that the conditions for teaching and learning are present and students have equal opportunity to master high standards.
- Help educators improve instruction.
- Design a system of comprehensive support and assistance for low-performing schools.
- Ensure that assistance builds school capacity and is school-specific.

CRPE, Making Standards Meaningful: High School Reform Efforts in Washington State (October 2001)

This report marks the third year of exploration by the Center on Reinventing Public Education into the way fast-improving schools in Washington State work. In our first two reports, Making Standards Work (1998) and Making Standards Stick (2000), we reported that elementary and middle schools can make a difference in raising student achievement in the state's new standards-based system. This year, we turned our attention to high schools. Using data from the tenth grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning

(WASL), we selected and interviewed principals from 26 high schools across the state that made greater gains than other schools serving similar populations of students. To provide a point of reference, we also interviewed 13 "comparison" school principals and conducted five site visits to talk to teachers and students about their schools.

Our findings suggest that the differences between improving and comparison high schools are less stark than those we discovered at the elementary and middle school levels. We learned that many schools in our sample, improving and comparison alike, went beyond just "test preparation" to begin to adjust their programs to match the new state standards and tests. Every school reviewed their curriculum and instruction to make sure that students will be exposed to the material and teaching methods that they will encounter on the tenth grade WASL. Nearly all schools (92%), as well, report that they have increased their focus on improving students' reading and writing skills, for instance by training all teachers in "reading across the curriculum" or by requiring students to do more writing in all classes, not just English or History. A small number of schools went a step farther to identify students who struggle in the core areas tested on the WASL, and began providing additional support through after-school programs or computer-assisted instruction.

Nevertheless, while on the surface many improving and comparison schools appear to be taking similar paths to improvement, improving schools stand out in several important ways. They are, on the whole, more

focused in their approach, more determined to succeed, and more actively engaging students and teachers in the challenge of making standards work. These differences are manifested in the following ways.

Improving schools:

- Pick a strategy for raising student achievement and stick to it despite the challenges and distractions they face.
- Embrace the new state expectations and WASL as positive tools for bringing about changes in their curricula, instruction and programs.
- Make new expectations for students count by building them into the existing structure of grades and course credits.
- Get in touch with individual students by creating smaller learning communities and tapping into students' opinions about their schools.
- Take responsibility for gaps in student learning by pressing teachers to examine shortcomings in student achievement and keeping up the pressure to improve, even when their districts and communities seem satisfied with their efforts.

Improving schools took one of three tacks to accomplish their goals. We identified a very small group of schools (only 2) that focused primarily on preparing students for the test itself. The majority of improving schools (14 schools) capitalized on the new standards and tests as a mechanism to focus adult efforts to improve student learning in more lasting ways. They emphasized the importance of the test, but at the same time began to make more lasting changes to their curriculum, teaching methods, expectations of students and teachers, and their relationships with students.

One-third of the improving schools (8 schools) in our sample took a slightly different approach. They focused predominantly on efforts identified in research as "best practices" used by effective high schools across the country (e.g. creating smaller learning communities or increasing the rigor of instruction for all students). These schools did not ignore the advent of the state standards and tests, but included them as targets within an existing strategy to improve. Our data show that these schools made slightly greater gains in student achievement than other improving schools that focused primarily on the standards and tests. More inquiry is needed to confirm the impact of these schools' approaches, however, as the number of schools involved was very small. (The remaining two improving schools in our sample were excluded from this portion of our analysis due to incomplete information.)

While the news from high schools is promising, the challenges that many schools face are even more daunting than those reported by elementary and middle schools. Principals in improving and comparison high schools agree that there are four main challenges they must overcome in order to make deeper and more lasting changes in their schools. They must:

1. Motivate students to take the WASL and learning seriously.
2. Leverage teacher energy and skills to improve their schools.
3. Close the significant gaps in some students' learning in a short period of time.

4. Move forward in an environment of uncertainty about the future of school accountability in Washington State.

While many improving schools made a strong start in addressing these challenges, most schools' success in raising the level of achievement of all students is far from assured. Numerous principals and teachers question their capacity to ensure all students a realistic chance of passing all four sections of the WASL and thus becoming eligible for a Certificate of Mastery (currently envisioned as a requirement for graduation starting with the class of 2008). For some, it is a matter of finding adequate time and energy to get the job done. For others, it is more a matter of increasing teachers' and communities' commitment to change. Some schools are counting on the advent of the Certificate of Mastery to boost student, parent and community motivation to improve, but many, too, acknowledge that motivation alone will not be enough to close the significant gaps in learning that some students bring to school. Some high schools are looking to state and local leaders to help them access new ideas on how to close those gaps, but at the same time admit that some staff members are unlikely to adopt those new strategies until the consequences of not doing so are made more clear.

Our findings are consistent with prior research on the progress and challenges of bringing about lasting improvements in high schools and student achievement. Experiences in states across the country suggest most large-scale reform efforts fail to affect more than a small number of teachers and schools. Making more fundamental changes that affect student learning in most high schools will require new ways of working by teachers, students, principals, parents and communities. State and local actors can help schools go beyond surface level changes to make standards meaningful by keeping up the pressure to improve, while also providing new incentives and opportunities for high schools to reshape the way teachers, schools and communities engage students in challenging learning experiences.

CRPE Making Standards Work: Active Voices, Focused Learning (February 1999)

In general, schools that made significant gains in test scores took a pro-active approach toward improvement. Principals and teachers assessed strengths and weaknesses, set a limited number of priorities, focused on improving instruction, and took the initiative to find the help the school needed. To make sure planned improvements truly happened, principals and teachers re-allocated funds, rearranged teacher work assignments and instructional schedules, and made sure all staff members coordinated their classroom work. Improving schools also continually – and candidly -- assessed own their progress.

Our findings make it clear that schools – and what the people who work in them do – can make a difference in what students learn. This conclusion should be no surprise. However, many critics of education reform claim that action at the school level either does not matter or cannot change enough to increase students' results. Some, noting that student achievement is correlated with family income and the presence of two educated parents, claim that the only way to raise scores for disadvantaged children is to change society. Others, noting that many teachers are not sure how to help their students meet higher standards, claim that schools can improve only after the state has re-trained all teachers or provided massive amounts of new money for lower class sizes and new books, instructional materials, and technology.

Scores on state tests correlate highly with family income and other indicators of socioeconomic status, but that does not tell the whole story. Children in some low-income schools did relatively well on the state tests, and children in some higher income schools did relatively poorly. Family income is an advantage for some

schools and a problem for others, but it in itself does not cause student learning. Further, some schools are clearly able to improve the effectiveness of the resources they have. Better family services and more investment in instructional materials and demanding teacher training and evaluation can also help. But schools can make a difference now.

More specifically, we found that:

Effective Changes In Teaching Methods and Materials Are Focused And School-Wide, Not Random And Fragmented In the two years since statewide testing began, most schools have made changes in what and how they teach. However, schools whose scores increased made changes that affected the whole school and unified the efforts of all teachers; schools whose scores did not increase added on new programs or materials that affected some teachers and not others and did not lead to a more unified school-wide approach.

Improving schools focused their efforts on developing children's skills in a few core subjects or skill areas. To make time for these efforts, many schools abandoned activities that were fun and familiar but had no well-defined instructional objectives. Schools whose scores did not increase were generally less focused on skills and more reluctant to eliminate activities that teachers enjoyed but were not clearly productive.

Improving Schools Operate as Teams, Not Random Associations. Improving schools did more than plan: they implemented, every day and in every classroom, and they made sure that teachers at every grade level were coordinating their efforts. Even the best-conceived strategies fail if teachers do not change what they are doing behind the closed doors of their classrooms.

Professional Development Is School Development. Improving schools had no more funding for teacher professional development than schools whose scores did not increase. However, the former group of schools took much more initiative to find and use professional development programs designed to remedy their particular instructional weaknesses and prioritized the use of their professional development time to support the school's improvement plan.

Performance Pressure Is Positive When It Leads To Determination, Not Fear. The vast majority of principals reported that the state standards and tests had created pressures for better and more effective teaching. None were complacent, even those whose scores had recently improved. Many principals of improving schools were proud of their gains but worried that some might be not be sustained if future 4th grade classes were less capable than those tested in 1998.

Improving Schools Don't Wait for Help, They Seek It Out. Principals of schools whose scores did not increase often criticized the help and materials provided by their school districts, complaining that help was too general, unfocused, and hard to use. Principals of improving schools were much more likely to say "the help is out there: it is up to us to select and use what we need."

Improving Schools Use Limited Resources Strategically. Improving schools focused all available funds on instruction by setting priorities and directing resources toward them. Schools whose scores increased were no more likely to have received extra funding than schools whose scores did not increase.

Parents Can Help. Improving schools were more likely than other schools to reach out to parents, explaining the state tests and the need for improved performance and asking for help at home, e.g. reading to children and checking homework.

Washington School Research Center (WSRC), Continuing to Bridge the Opportunity Gap: Taking a Closer Look at 10 High Performing Elementary Schools in Washington State (April 2005)

High levels of student achievement are the expectation for all Washington State schools. In recent years children in a number of both rural and urban Washington State elementary schools with significant levels of poverty have been successful in attaining these state standards, and have thus shown that high levels achievement, as measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), *are possible*. We began our study of high poverty, high performing "gap setters" in the fall of 2001. The results of that research were published in the Washington School Research Center publication: *Bridging the Opportunity Gap: How Washington Elementary Schools are Meeting Achievement Standards (2002)*. The report was well received across the state but many requested to know more about the schools in the study, and many educators requested greater detail describing the four primary factors of effective schools as presented in the report. As a result, a follow-up study of these high performing schools was launched in January 2003.

The goal of the study and this report is to expand upon the findings in our first report and to help educators around the state understand in greater detail how the four primary factors are manifested in effective schools. Our hope in providing more detail is that it may lead to open collaboration among schools across the state.

This follow-up study confirms that substantial levels of achievement are within reach and accessible to educators who are willing to review their programs and make the necessary changes. During the follow-up research, 10 of the original 16 schools were visited for an indepth look at their continued success toward state reform efforts. All 10 of the schools have excelled in raising student achievement as measured by the WASL. These schools have focused on Second Order change and have successfully identified and implemented the four primary factors that have led to student success.1 Examples from these schools demonstrate how virtually any school can begin to successfully replicate the primary factors—schools with student enrollments from 140 to 450, schools within large cities, or those adjacent to wheat fields in Eastern Washington.

In our original study we selected 16 high-poverty, high-performing public elementary schools and identified common characteristics that enabled them to succeed given their respective student populations. Findings were similar across schools and districts, resulting in several clearly identifiable themes. We have categorized these themes as *primary factors* and view them as essential elements of successful and effective schools. Without these factors in place it is doubtful that fundamental change can occur. The four primary factors are:

- Factor 1: A caring and collaborative professional environment
- Factor 2: Strong leadership
- Factor 3: Focused, intentional instruction
- Factor 4: Effective use of assessment data

Although we have categorized the findings into discrete factors, they were found to be inseparable and do not work independently. It should be noted that in most of the schools we studied all of the factors build on each other to maximize adult and student learning.

WSRC, From Compliance to Commitment: A Report on Effective School Districts in Washington State (November 2004)

As Washington elementary schools implement a comprehensive reform agenda in order to raise achievement for all students, it has become clear that some schools are having greater success than others. It has become clear as well that some *districts* are enjoying more success than others. In this research we attempted to determine the reasons for their success; that is, what is the "value-added" by the district in driving school change?

When educators from across 10 districts were asked to reflect on the role of the district in raising student achievement, they offered a number of explanations. For example, shared decision-making, alignment of programs, and using data to inform instruction were among the reasons given for district success in raising student achievement. Initial analysis of the interview data uncovered no simple steps to district effectiveness, although six important themes emerged. These themes, or *characteristics of effectiveness,* include:

1. Commitment to school reform
2. Ownership for student learning
3. Distributed leadership
4. Collaborative organizational environment
5. Focus on adult learning
6. Trust and relationship-building

As important as these characteristics of effectiveness appeared to be, however, of greater import was the culture and philosophical orientation of the district office. In these districts, central office personnel had accepted the intent of the school reform initiative. They were not simply compliant to school reform mandates; they were committed to the improvement of student learning. In most instances this was no quick and easy process; indeed, several school personnel described it as "long and painful." According to one, for example, "We spent a year or two just on beliefs. It was a long process of continuously going back to what we believe. What do we mean that all students can meet standards? Everything that we have done since, we have gone back to these belief statements . . . it was hugely important but painful." A board member from one district explained, "We are spending time discussing what we believe is the purpose of education. What are we going to defend at all cost?" And a principal commented, "It's not about facilities or books. It is about a belief that we can do this."

Further examination of the interview responses revealed that these re-cultured districts held certain assumptions about school reform and about teaching and learning. There is an assumption that collaborative, trusting relationships are more productive than adversarial relationships. Furthermore, there is an assumption

that the entire organization must be involved and hold responsibility for student achievement: as several interviewees noted, student learning is everyone's business, from the superintendent to the transportation department. In these districts, central office personnel were aware of the deep and systemic nature of school reform. They displayed a unified commitment to supporting the work of the schools, they used the language of outcomes, and they claimed ownership and responsibility for student performance. As one district administrator noted, "The problems of the classroom are the problems of the district." The re-cultured districts have been intentional about aligning programs and resources to support student learning; in most cases this has meant that the focus of their work has narrowed considerably.

Effective districts, then, share certain *characteristics* such as a commitment to using data, support for adult learning, and distributed leadership. However, according to interview data, these characteristics alone do not ensure that more students will meet the learning standards. Results of our work suggest that these districts have made a deep and more systemic commitment to raising student achievement: they have taken responsibility across the organization, at both a philosophical level and a practical level, to improve teaching and learning. From the superintendent to the business office to the transportation department, central office personnel in these districts have taken ownership and responsibility for student performance.

WSRC, Lessons Learned from Texas Schools: Closing the Opportunity Gap for Hispanic Students in Washington State (July 2003)

Washington State holds high academic standards for all students, and while some schools are steadily making progress in meeting these standards, others are not. Particularly troubling is the lack of progress being made by middle school students and Hispanic students. Our goal in conducting this study was to identify factors that contribute to academic success in middle schools and schools with significant Hispanic populations. While there were not enough of these schools to complete the study in Washington State, a number of such schools were identified in Texas. We chose to collect the data for the study directly from teachers, administrators and central office personnel in an attempt to understand the factors leading to their success.

Responses across schools and districts were consistent and were categorized by researchers into the most commonly noted factors for students' success:. High expectations, data-driven instruction, collaboration and teaming, strong leadership, focused professional development activities, focused curriculum, and parental involvement. Teachers and administrators suggested that the high expectations they hold for students and for themselves are at the heart of their success. These educators are convinced their students can achieve at high levels no matter what their background. Excuses for poor performance are not given, nor are they accepted, and this includes *limited English proficiency*. Expectations are high for teachers and administrators as well. Teachers that do not take their responsibility seriously are not welcome in these schools. Hard work and commitment are expected from all. Data are used as a matter of course to inform and modify instruction. The overall environment in these schools is built on collaboration where teaming and sharing are part of the culture. Grade level teams, academic teams, and curriculum teams meet regularly to discuss student progress and to plan lessons and projects.

Another factor directly related to the success of these schools is strong leadership. Principals hold high expectations for their teachers, support their efforts, and provide direction and resources. They do not tolerate "slackers," a fact that teachers appreciate. Finally, professional development activities in these schools are ongoing and focused. Teachers are encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise, both within and

beyond the school building. Districts provide professional development opportunities on a regular basis, and all continuing education efforts are expected to lead to improvements in teaching and learning.

The academic success enjoyed by these schools is in part a result of their efforts to teach a focused and aligned curriculum. There is no confusion about what to teach or when to teach it. Timelines keep teachers on track, and cross-grade alignment ensures that students are ready for the next level of instruction.

In addition, there is a deep-seated conviction among these teachers and administrators that parent support is essential to their success, and therefore much effort is spent connecting school and home. Parents are made aware of academic expectations, curriculum resources, grading and behavior guidelines, and strategies for helping their child be successful. As a result they understand the school's instructional program and support the efforts of teachers and administrators.

Not surprisingly, ESL education is an essential element of each school's instructional agenda, and although their specific programs differ, the goal of ESL education is consistent across schools: to transition students as quickly as possible into English-language instruction. That, educators believe, offers second language learner children the best hope of learning and meeting standards.

These individual factors emerged consistently across schools and are certainly important to the success each has achieved. Still, it is important to point out that while these factors are clear and compelling, and while they do help explain what is involved in bringing students to standard, they appear to stem from a necessary and overarching belief system. This belief system represents, in many cases, an important philosophical shift among educators in how they understand and approach teaching and learning. These teachers truly believe that all children can learn. They have internalized the essence of school reform and feel a high degree of responsibility for helping their students succeed. When asked if this creates too much pressure for them, one teacher responded, "It's not pressure, it's what I need to do. I was hired to help the students learn." Nothing gets in the way of these teachers doing everything they can to make sure students are successful. While factors of success noted in these schools offer insight into specific explanations for a school's high performance, the belief system from which those factors stem is at the heart of their success. It is doubtful that a school will see anything more than short-term achievement gains without such a belief system that is understood and accepted by all.

In our earlier report on successful elementary schools in Washington we pointed out that the expectations in a high standards environment for elementary and middle level schools are much the same: clear learning objectives in the form of the state's essential learnings, a high-stakes assessment, expectations that *all* students will achieve at high levels, and accountability. We also stated that the lessons learned from the elementary schools should be valuable to the state's middle-level schools. "In a high standards environment a new approach to curriculum and instruction is necessary, and successful middle and junior high schools will recognize this fact and adjust accordingly" (WSRC, 2002, p. 26). We were unable, however, to identify highly successful schools in Washington State to study their practices. It is important to point out that in the Texas schools we studied *there were few, if any, distinctions between the driving forces behind successful elementary schools and successful middle schools.* There is growing evidence that at all levels academic success for *all* students is dependent on a deep philosophical shift in the educational beliefs driving practice and a drastic change in the professional environment that characterizes most of the state's schools.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOLS

In an earlier section of this report we acknowledged the limitations of across-state studies of student achievement. At the same time, we maintain that there are lessons to be learned by examining successful practices with student populations elsewhere that are similar to our own and that are not being adequately served by the current system. Schools in Washington operate in a different political environment and are governed by different laws and policies. However, the findings outlined in this report strongly suggest a certain direction schools must go if their Hispanic students are to share in the academic success of their classmates. In fact, the findings suggest a direction schools should go if they want *all* of their students, regardless of ethnicity or LEP status, to achieve at high levels.

It is important to point out that the factors attributable to these Texas schools with high percentages of Hispanic and LEP students are basically identical to the factors attributable to the success of any school in Texas, regardless of the student population. They are also almost identical to the factors that we have found that lead to school success in Washington. In this sense, there is really nothing new in these findings. However, what is new with these schools is the *degree* to which they have implemented a high standards and high expectations philosophy in their schools, modified only to provide assistance for language learning.

In a previous WSRC report (2002) we summarized two models of education that can represent two ends of a continuum. Those two models are shown here in Table 3. We described schools with the characteristics on the left of the table as traditional or typical in their professional environments. Our research and this Texas research has shown that schools that have made the transition to the environments described on the right of the tables are the schools that are most successful in a high standards environment. This transition, however, is seldom an all-or-nothing affair. Our research has shown that successful schools in Washington are in the process of moving to the right, but they have not made the complete transition to the new philosophy. What the researchers saw in Texas was that these schools have taken the philosophy and ideas to their logical conclusion. They have taken these ideas much further, and it is clear their Hispanic and LEP students have benefited.

In Washington, this becomes a much more complex problem in many districts because of the large number of languages spoken. The implication of these findings is that if Washington schools in general must make some degree of second-order changes for their students to stand the greatest chance of success, schools with Hispanic and LEP students of any background must go even further in the process of adopting the high standards culture and environment. Part of this change must be an acceptance of language as a natural condition and not something that is to be used as an excuse. The Washington researchers were impressed in every school with the degree to which the Texas educators dealt in a matter-of-fact way with LEP students, in much the same way they did *any* other potential hindrance to student learning.

Furthermore, if teachers must change their thinking about LEP students, districts also must face their obligations to help the teachers work effectively with these students. In most of the schools researchers visited there were not large numbers of bilingual teachers. However, there were many teachers with GT and ESL training, and the district or school played a large role in that training.

Equally impressive to the Washington research teams was the degree to which the system held educators accountable for student learning *and* the degree to which teachers held each other accountable. Neither of these types of accountability is often seen in Washington schools. In fact, transfer, evaluation, and hiring

policies often work against this type of professionalism. It seems improbable that Washington schools can make the necessary second-order changes without teachers and administrators working together to put student learning at the top of their concerns.

The fact remains that in Washington many schools have only begun to understand the implications of a high standards environment, and only a few of them have made major steps in changing their ideas and philosophy of education. Research conducted in Washington, as well as in other parts of the country, has shown that students are able to achieve at higher levels than many people thought was possible—and this includes achievement by Hispanic and LEP students. The success of the Texas schools shows that it is possible, but it will require dramatic changes among teachers and within schools and districts.

WSRC, A Decade of Reform: A Summary of Research Findings on Classroom, School, and District Effectiveness in Washington (April 2003)

It has been ten years since the passing of the current educational reform legislation in Washington. The process begun in 1993 included, among other things, the identification of new student learning expectations needed for success in the 21st Century, a new measure of those expectations, and an expectation that all students will achieve those standards. More recently, the passing of the federal law commonly known as the "No Child Left Behind Act" has added a new sense of urgency for the reform efforts. At the same time, the expectations for higher academic achievement as measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) have been difficult for many schools to meet.

As in most states, educational research in Washington is conducted by a variety of organizations and individuals who share a common interest but often lack any coordinating agency. Several years after the passing of the 1993 legislation a variety of researchers began to examine the effects of the law on Washington's schools using diverse strategies and research approaches. Over the past five years studies have been conducted by the RAND Corporation, the School of Education at Seattle Pacific University, the Center for the Reinvention of Public Education at the University of Washington, and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, among others. Each of these groups employed different research methodologies, but they all were concerned with identifying the effects of the legislation on public schools in the state and with identifying those changes in school and classrooms that increase student learning. Their findings are dispersed in a variety of individual reports with varying levels of distribution and awareness.

For the past two years researchers at the Washington School Research Center have been pursuing answers to these and other research questions. Through our work with the Just for the Kids data analysis system, the production of technical reports analyzing extant data, and studying successful schools we have attempted to add to the knowledge base of the profession about success in a high standards environment.

The dissemination of our research to educators in a non-technical and useful manner is a significant part of our mission. Toward this end we have presented our findings to a large number of educators in the state. One of the approaches we have taken is to place our research findings in the broader context of other research in the state to show that there is an emerging consistent and coherent picture of successful reform. Educators have responded favorably to this message, and on numerous occasions we have been asked if the contents of the presentations are available in written form to share with their colleagues. Until now, the contents only

existed in pieces in various presentation materials and reports. In this report I have attempted to summarize and assimilate the various research findings in one document.

Synthesizing research findings from multiple sources requires a number of decisions and judgments. Most important is determining what questions will be the focus of the review. These are listed in the first section of the report and, I believe, are of the greatest immediate interest to policy-makers and the profession. Research has not and cannot answer all of our questions definitively, but I believe in this instance there is a growing body of evidence that shows that students are capable of higher levels of achievement than many previously thought was possible. In addition, when schools and educators change in certain ways the likelihood of higher achievement is increased dramatically.

WSRC, The Influence of District Size, School Size, and Socioeconomic Status on Student Achievement in Washington: A Replication Study Using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (November 2002)

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the role that school size plays in creating effective learning environments for students. Serious questions have been raised about the "bigger is better" approach to schools, and policy makers are asking researchers if there are research findings on this important topic. In fact, there have been numerous studies, both quantitative and qualitative, strongly suggesting students generally do better in smaller schools than larger schools.

Such a study published in the year 2000 on education in the state of Georgia caught the interest of the Urban Issues Committee of the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). Recognizing that such research findings have direct policy implications, the Association approached the Washington School Research Center (WSRC) about replicating the study in the state of Washington. Through the joint sponsorship of WSSDA and WSRC, this technical report is a replication of that study using achievement, poverty, school and district size data from Washington State.

The research findings on school size show that the question is a complex one, and that there are numerous factors that might interact with school size to account for variation in student and school performance. Using a statistical procedure called Hierarchical Linear Modeling, WSRC researchers Abbott, Joireman, and Stroh attempt to identify the ways in which district size, school size, and family income level interact to effect student achievement.

Replication research across states is difficult because of differing state tests, grade structures, data bases, and other factors. And, in fact, while this study replicates the general approach used in the Georgia study, it does differ in some significant ways. First, WASL scores were used for this study rather than the ITBS; second, because of questions about the reliability of the high school poverty data, 4th and 7th grade data were analyzed, while the Georgia study analyzed 8th and 11th grade data. Still, the results presented here complement the original findings and add to the body of research that strongly suggests that school size and district size do matter.

The WSRC researchers conclude: "We found that large district size is detrimental to achievement in Washington 4th and 7th grades in that it strengthens the negative relationship between school poverty and student achievement." Further, they state, "the negative relationship between school poverty and achievement is stronger in larger districts," and "small schools appear to have the greatest equity effects." In other words,

when school poverty is high, children perform better in small districts, and the effect of school level poverty on achievement is smallest when both the district and school are small.

WSRC, Bridging the Opportunity Gap: How Washington Elementary Schools are Meeting Achievement Standards (May 2002)

Higher standards for student achievement have become an expectation for all of Washington's schools. Over the last several years the students in some elementary schools have been more successful at meeting the new standards than have students in other schools. In fact, some students from schools with relatively high levels of poverty have shown that student achievement of the standards is possible. This is not an easy task for schools, but nonetheless, with the proper modifications to the school and professional environment, these schools have shown that substantial levels of achievement are within reach.

In this study we sought to identify the changes that these successful schools had made that enabled them to "beat the odds," given their student populations. To identify why these schools have been successful, we chose to listen to the educators themselves, as they described their approaches to school reform and the new standards as measured by the WASL. We then tried to identify themes and common changes that had characterized their responses. Because all of the research teams consisted of experienced educators, we also considered our own impressions of these schools' characteristics in drawing our conclusions.

The explanations given by the school educators were similar across schools and districts. We identified four primary factors that appear to have led to the necessary changes in the school to enhance student achievement. First, the school and professional environment is one in which adults put the well being of others, both adults and students, as the foremost concern. These schools are places where the adults care about each other, like where they work, and work hard together for the sake of the students. Second, there is strong leadership at these schools that has articulated a vision and set clear goals for the adults in the school. Whether by direct means or by more indirect approaches, such as the delegation of responsibilities, the leadership in the school has been strong and appreciated. Third, the curriculum and instruction in the schools is focused and intentional, addressing the state's essential learnings. Teachers in these schools believe that their students, regardless of background, can learn what is required. With all adults working collaboratively with a common focus the results have been affirmative. Fourth, assessment results inform instruction. WASL and other assessment results are seen as important sources of information for identifying strengths and weaknesses of students individually and of the school as a whole. Such information is used to provide necessary instruction and to guide the professional development of the teachers.

In addition, we also identified a second group of factors that were present in some, but not all, of the schools. While the educators in the schools identified the factors as important to their success, we noticed that many times they were factors that enabled or aided the adults at the school in developing the four primary factors. These secondary factors included small school size, district support, lack of student and staff mobility, parental and community involvement, and professional development. These factors may be helpful, but apparently are not mandatory. For example, large schools and schools without substantial district support have also been successful in the reform effort.

Finally, we tried to look "deeper" at the educators at these schools to identify any unspoken but implied characteristics that appeared to be present in all locales. We concluded that these schools shared one general trait that was at the foundation of their success. Succinctly stated:

> *"A fundamental characteristic of all of these schools is that the majority of the educators are "on board" with the state reform efforts. The educators have all agreed, either because of philosophical belief, acceptance, or acquiescence, to move the school in a certain direction. A logical necessity of this trait is the personal willingness of each teacher to give up long-held beliefs and practices at the school and in the classroom."*

WSRC, The Relationships Among Achievement, Low Income, and Ethnicity Across Six Groups of Washington State Students (July 2001)

We are pleased to provide this technical report on the relationships among student achievement, income, and ethnicity as the first publication for Washington educators by the Washington School Research Center. The questions addressed by these analyses are important considerations for all of us concerned with improving education in the state of Washington. Media reports that highlight the different achievement levels of various ethnic groups of children are common. These differences are a source of great concern among community groups, and rightfully so. Yet, those of us who work with data and statistics on a regular basis are acutely aware of the dangers inherent in reporting group achievement results that consider only one characteristic for creating those groups.

Factors affecting student achievement are varied and complex, and failure to consider multiple factors may lead to erroneous or simplistic answers to very complicated questions. In this report, professors Abbott and Joireman address the question of differences in school level achievement depending on the ethnic composition of the student population, so often reported in the media, while at the same time considering the income levels of the students' families. They begin this effort with a brief review of research conducted elsewhere on this topic, and conclude that previous research has shown that "income is generally a better predictor of student achievement than ethnicity."

Using aggregate school 3rd & 6th grade ITBS test scores for 1999 and 2000, 4th grade WASL scores for 1999 and 2000, and 7th grade WASL scores for 1999 for all schools in the state, Abbott and Joireman examine the relationships among these scores and the percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch at the school, and the various percentages of students comprising a variety of ethnic groups. Using a statistical procedure called multiple regression, they are able to determine the relative importance of these latter two variables in determining the schools' achievement levels. Their findings? "Across a variety of grades and tests, our results support the conclusion that low income explains a much larger percentage of the variance in academic achievement than ethnicity."

Abbott and Joireman do not say that ethnicity is unimportant or unrelated to achievement, but low income appears to be a much more influential factor. They conclude that, "the relationship between ethnicity and academic achievement is mostly indirect: ethnicity relates to low income and low income relates to academic achievement . . ." In other words, low income is the stronger predictor of school achievement, and nonwhite families are over-represented among the low incomes. These findings suggest therefore, that schools with predominately white, low income populations have achievement levels more in common with schools with

nonwhite, low income populations than they do with schools with white, high income populations. Conversely, the achievement levels of schools with high income student populations more closely resemble other schools with high income student bodies irrespective of their ethnic composition.

Educators throughout the state, indeed throughout the country, are striving to raise the achievement levels of all students. A student's ethnicity is often an observable student characteristic that is frequently viewed as a determinant of that student's achievement level. However, these and other results suggest that it is the effects of poverty that play a much larger role in a student's chance for success in school, and it is those effects that educators and policy makers should consider first as prevention, intervention, and remedial programs are designed.

Upcoming Studies in K-12

PTA, Follow-Up to Prior K-12 Finance Report (Summer 2005)

This summer, the PTA is expected to release a follow-up to "Washington State School Finances: Does Every Child Count?". The new report will include case studies from three districts: Highline, Kent, and Yakima.

JLARC/State Auditor, Alternative Learning Experience Programs Study (July 2005)

The 2004 supplemental budget required JLARC and the State Auditor's Office to conduct a legal and financial review of alternative learning experience (ALE) programs under WAC 392-121-182. The study should include:

- Numbers of students served, variations in program types, and funding patterns for ALE programs, specifically including "digital curriculum and online courses;"
- The adequacy of current program rules, regulations, and procedures to safeguard against the misuse of public resources;
- Identification of policy and administrative options to address deficiencies; and
- The potential fiscal impact of any proposed options for changes to ALE programs.

An interim report was provided in February 2005 focusing specifically on the digital or online learning ALE programs.

The final report will include updates regarding new program rules to be adopted this summer in response to SSB 5828, which enacted many of the recommendations made in the interim report.

JLARC, School District Expenditures (August 2005)

The JLARC committee has undertaken a study to review school-level expenditures and performance measures. The study will address five questions:

1. What processes do districts use to distribute funds to schools?

2. What school-level enrollment and expenditure data is available?

3. What measures are used to track student achievement and school performance?

4. How valuable is school-level enrollment and expenditure data in understanding school performance?

5. What are the national trends in school-based or student-based budgeting and how might these be applied in Washington?

PESB, Educator Preparation Systems (December 2005)

ESSB 5732 charged the professional educator standards board with conducting a comprehensive analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Washington's educator and administrator certification and preparation systems. The board will use the analysis to develop a planning document to guide the assumption of policy and rule-making authority responsibilities for educator and administrator preparation and certification.

OSPI, Dropout Prevention (December 2005)

SHB 1708 requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to review and evaluate promising programs and practices for dropout prevention. The superintendent must include in the review dropout prevention programs using nonpunitive approaches to school discipline. The Superintendent's report must include recommendations on:

1. The most promising comprehensive dropout prevention programs and practices that encompass school-wide or district-wide restructuring of the delivery of educational services;

2. The most promising targeted dropout prevention programs and practices designed to provide social and other services in coordination with educational services to students who are at risk of dropping out due to the presence of family, personal, economic, or cultural circumstances; and

3. Policy and other changes to enhance the ability of career and technical education and skills center programs to further contribute to dropout prevention efforts.

Joint Select Committee on Secondary Education (January 2006)

HCR 4408 created the Joint Select Committee and charged it with examining:

- Rates of student academic achievement in middle and high schools;
- Structures for middle school/ high school effective organization;
- State and national literature and research on secondary school redesign;
- Degree to which state high schools have organized or reorganized to support student learning and improved academic achievement;
- Effect of current delivery model on academic achievement, achievement gaps and dropout rates;
- Secondary schools successfully teaching mathematics and science; and
- Secondary schools successfully providing challenging and flexible options for students.

JLARC and State Auditor's Office, Special Education Excess Cost Accounting Methodology and Expenditure Reporting Requirements (January 2006)

The 2005-07 budget required JLARC and SAO to conduct a review of the special education excess cost accounting methodology and expenditure reporting requirements. The review may include:

- An examination of the current special education excess cost accounting methodology and related special education expenditure reporting requirements;
- An examination of whether opportunities exist for modifying the current excess cost accounting methodology and expenditure reporting requirements;
- An assessment of the potential impact on school districts if the current excess cost accounting methodology and expenditure reporting requirements are modified; and
- Any findings and recommendations from the state auditor's office examination of whether school districts are appropriately and consistently applying the current excess cost methodology.

OPSI/CCSSO, Cost of No Child Left Behind Act (Spring 2006)

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is participating in a consortium of 12 states to define the resources states and school districts are expending to implement the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The cost of NCLB is defined as the value of the resources – both time and materials – a state needs to:

1. Implement the *explicit* requirements of NCLB that are related to accountability (including the development and implementation of school and school district performance standards, assessments to measure student performance, and consequences of not meeting performance expectations);

2. Meet any *new* requirements of NCLB that go beyond what had been required under the previous reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – such as requirements about the qualifications of educators who work with students; and

3. Administer all aspects of NCLB, including managing the numerous federal grant programs it supports.

The data will be used to inform the national discussion of course corrections to NCLB as policy makers and lawmakers consider the January 2008 re-authorization of NCLB.

As of August 2005, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is collecting data on state agency expenditures and costs and is in the process of enlisting 10 to 12 school districts to participate in the local costs component of the study. The study completion is anticipated to be spring 2006.

JLARC, Student Transportation Formula (June 2006)

The 2005-07 budget initiated a JLARC study of the current state pupil transportation funding formula, which will:

- Include a review of the funding mechanisms used by other states;

- Identify best practices;
- Evaluate the extent to which the formula captures the costs of providing pupil transportation for basic education programs; and
- Develop alternative formulas for allocating state funding to school districts for the transportation of students for basic education programs based on the results of the evaluation.

The alternative formulas must take into account the legislative definition of basic education programs, promote the efficient use of state and local resources, and allow local school district control over the management of pupil transportation systems.

WSIPP, Immigrant Student Study (December 2006)

The 2005-07 budget charged the Washington State Institute for Public Policy with conducting an analysis of the availability, services, and effectiveness of programs in community and technical colleges that serve the educational needs of recent immigrant students who are not proficient in English and who are or have been enrolled in high school but have not met graduation requirements. The analysis will include the type of programs provided, the geographic availability of programs, the identification of best practices, how the programs are funded, and the effectiveness of the programs. The Institute will make recommendations for improving the programs to better meet the needs of recent immigrant students and for expanding the availability of programs statewide.

CRPE, K-12 Finance Redesign Project (Ongoing)

The School Finance Redesign Project (SFRP), funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will examine how K-12 finance can be redesigned to better support student performance. The project is focusing on K-12 systems in four states: Washington, Texas, North Carolina, and Ohio. The project will consider how to fund a high quality teacher in every classroom, how to narrow the achievement gap and how to reallocate existing resources to gain better results. The researchers will study governmental policies, finance structures, and professional practices; they will develop and assess policy options for finance redesign; and they will fashion implementation tools for policy makers and educators.

The redesign project is shaped by a resource allocation-utilization perspective, which raises a set of core questions:

- How and why are educational resources used as they are?
- What are key decision points in school finance systems and the dynamics that govern them?
- What incentives, constraints, and conventions produce the current systems' effects?
- What mechanisms support the status quo?
- What congruence or conflict exists between finance procedures and professional judgments regarding effective resource use?
- What levers can redirect the system to more productive resource uses?
- How could money be used differently to better support student performance?

- What incentives, investments in capacity, or new structures or procedures support learning directly?
- What do they cost?
- What policy options or new practices could effect these changes, linking resources with performance?
- What is the feasibility of these options? What tools make these options accessible to practitioners?

The first reports are expected in December 2005 or January 2006. Other reports will follow.

RECENT & UPCOMING HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES

Legislative Studies

JLARC: Higher Education Capital Facilities: Expanding the Comparable Framework Preliminary Report (2005)

KEY FINDINGS:

First, JLARC finds that it is feasible to advance the framework from a static look at building conditions to a more dynamic outlook on building preservation by incorporating dates of system renewal and replacement into the framework.

Second, JLARC finds that, at the present time, it is not feasible to incorporate modernization information into the framework. Survey and measurement techniques are emerging, but there is not yet one approach that lends comparability on a statewide basis for the Comparable Framework.

Third, JLARC finds that it is possible to add infrastructure information to the framework that would provide the Office of Financial Management (OFM), the Legislature and policy advisors like the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) with comparable, quantified condition profiles about infrastructure at campuses across the state. However, taking the next step to estimate preservation backlogs would require extensive additional infrastructure engineering-based research.

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION FINANCE

The House created an Education Finance Structure Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee to continue the work of the interim workgroup. This subcommittee considered both K-12 and Higher Education finance issues during 10 meetings over five weeks.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Explore an increased per-FTE subsidy in exchange for institutions agreeing to provide more high-demand courses/graduates
- Explore income-based tuition policy on a pilot basis
- Allow institutions to raise tuition to the average charged by their peers
- "Buy" current over-enrollment; provide subsidies for students currently enrolled for whom no subsidy is currently paid by the state

- Allow branch campuses to enroll freshmen/sophomore students

WSIPP: Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification in Washington State (2004)

The term alternative teacher certification describes programs that allow adults with college degrees to become teachers without enrolling in a traditional teacher training program. Other states established alternative certification to address teacher shortages and to attract mid-career professionals and minorities into teaching. Typically, these programs involve intensive summer coursework to prepare interns for teaching the following autumn. When the school year begins, the interns are the paid teachers of record, although they continue to take evening or weekend classes. These interns usually have a veteran mentor teacher. Interns receive full certification in one to two years.

KEY FINDINGS:
The cohort examined in the study (2002-03) resembled the overall teaching workforce in its demographic profile (race, age, gender)

The new pathway met most legislative goals; the legislature wanted to ensure that graduates of the new programs would:

- Filling teacher shortages
- Meet the same standards for certification as traditionally-prepared interns
- Receive high-quality instruction
- Receive flexible, expedient instruction

While the programs themselves differed, graduates were highly rated by field supervisors, principals, etc.

HIGHER EDUCATION BRANCH CAMPUSES IN WASHINGTON STATE (2003)
The 1989 Legislature established five branch campuses operated by the state's two public

research universities, the University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU). To review the role branch campuses have played in Washington's higher education system, a bill before the 2002 Legislature1 directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to examine:

- The original mission of branch campuses;
- Whether branch campuses are meeting their original mission; and
- Whether key factors that led to the creation of branch campuses have changed.

KEY FINDINGS:

- The branch campuses comprise 2.4 percent of Washington's public higher education enrollment (6 percent of public four-year enrollment). Although the branches' role in the system is small, there are two policy objectives that merit legislative attention. To get the most value from branch campuses, the state could consider actions that: ***align branch campus policies with the state's higher education goals*** and ***improve the branch two plus two model.***

- Branch campuses have expanded access to higher education. The five branch campuses accounted for half of statewide upper division and graduate public enrollment growth since 1990. Branches enroll increasing numbers of transfer students each year, and data analysis indicates branches target placebound (local, older, working, part-time) students.
- Branch campuses contribute to regional economic development. Branch campuses positively affect local economies, although the extent of their economic impact has not been measured. Data analysis reveals that branch degree programs roughly correspond with regional occupational projections.
- Branch campuses are more costly due to a number of factors, including their upper division structure, program mix, more part-time students, size/newness, etc.

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATION IN WASHINGTON STATE (2002)

In 2002, the Board of Directors for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) directed staff to review the mission and operations of the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). This report presents observations of the statutory role and functioning of the HECB based on interviews with individuals with close ties to higher education coordination, policy, and administration. The report also describes the evolution of higher education coordination in Washington State, the current role and authority of the HECB, other states' approaches to governance, and emerging approaches to coordinating higher education.

KEY FINDINGS:

- The overall role and focus of the HECB needs greater clarification.
- Some regulatory and review functions such as program approval and operating budget review are of questionable value.
- Administrative functions, particularly financial aid, work well.
- Strengthen and focus on the HECB's planning and policy roles.

HECB Final Report on Academic Progress (2004)

This study, undertaken with the SBCTC, was the result of 2003 SB 5135, which directed the public higher education system to develop policies to ensure that students complete their degree/certificate programs in a timely manner. Specifically, the bill was an attempt to address the following practices:

1. Students taking 125% or more of the required credits necessary to graduate
2. Students dropping 25% or more of their credit load in a quarter
3. Students on academic probation longer than one term.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The HECB does not recommend that the Legislature take any specific action at this time. The Board's 2004 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education will include recommendations on academic progress as they pertain to the subjects of enrollment, accountability, and performance contracts.

2. SB 5135 specifically asks whether increased tuition and fees should be uniformly charged to students as an additional incentive for timely completion of degree/certificate programs. The HECB has recommended that institutions be granted local tuition-setting authority, with certain constraints; the Board believes that the current statutory provision allowing surcharges is sufficient, with each institution determining for itself the best practices to reach its goals.

3. SB 5135 addresses several efficiency issues that will be considered as the state develops an ongoing system to gauge the progress of students and institutions in achieving state goals. State higher education efficiency goals should be expressed broadly and allow colleges and universities to determine how best to make progress toward them. This approach provides institutions with the management flexibility to achieve the goals, while recognizing differences in student needs and in the missions and programs of the individual colleges and universities.

HECB Strategic Master Plan (2004/05)

The HECB updates their Strategic Master Plan every four years. The latest update occurred in 2004. The recommendations center on the following policy goals:

1. Funding for student success
2. Allocating student enrollments
3. Increasing the number of degrees in high-demand fields
4. Keeping college tuition affordable and predictable
5. Promoting opportunity through student financial assistance
6. Meeting regional higher education needs
7. Helping transfer students earn bachelor's degrees
8. Helping students make the transition to college
9. Reducing barriers for non-traditional students
10. Promoting student success through greater accountability
11. Measuring student success with an improved data system

Learn more about the specifics of these recommendations by clicking on these headings (will open a PDF file from the HECB).

SBCTC: Role of Pre-college (Developmental and Remedial) Education for Recent High School Graduates Attending Washington Community and Technical Colleges - System Summary for Students Enrolled in 2003-04

KEY FINDINGS

1. Fifty-five (55) percent of community and technical college students who graduated from high school in 2003 took pre-college (also known as remedial) classes in 2003-04. This was a decrease from 57 percent in the previous year. These students – totaling 10,371 – enrolled in pre-college math, English or reading.

2. Each year about 30 percent of high school graduates enroll immediately in community and technical colleges, and an additional 16 percent enroll within one or two years after high school graduation. Within three years of high school graduation, nearly half of all high school graduates have enrolled at a community or technical college in Washington.

The rate of pre-college math taking by recent high school graduates is high but no longer increasing. Joint efforts of K-16 leaders should lead to an eventual decline in the rate of pre-college math course taking by recent graduates.

Community and technical colleges, like baccalaureate institutions, regard students as ready for college-level math after successful completion of intermediate algebra. Students are best prepared for college-level math if enrolled in a rigorous math or related class through their senior year.

Pre-college math courses do not apply to the student's degree credits and may extend the time it takes to earn a degree. Although this extends the time and cost of college, most students who take pre-college math courses do achieve their academic goals. They successfully complete the pre-college courses and move on to complete their degrees or certificates. A study of recent baccalaureate graduates found that 48 percent of those who started at the community and technical colleges straight from high school had taken a pre-college course, most often math. Those students graduated at high rates in all major fields, and with senior-year GPAs comparable to students who did not take pre-college courses, and to students who started at the university (2.95 for younger CTC transfers with pre-college course, 3.03 for younger CTC transfers without pre-college courses, and 2.98 for direct-entry students).

SBCTC: Access and Success for System Goals for People of Color in Washington Community and Technical Colleges: Eighth Progress Report (2002)

A review of the indicators suggests colleges are providing equitable access to college for students in general. The access ratio for all groups of color ranges from 1.18 to 1.52, substantially 1.00 for overall enrollment, including basic skills. The college-level access ratio is also high Asian/Pacific Islander, African American and Native American. It is close to parity (.92) for Hispanics.

In terms of student progress, the basic skills rate for students of color improved in 2000-01 below that of whites. The system is not having success in improving student progress in college-classes for students of color or for white students. Of those students retained, completion in preparatory programs has improved for students of color. The transfer rates have improved rate for African American and Latino/Hispanic students.

The diversity of full-time faculty diversity of the state population, and the rate of growth for faculty of color has slowed.

SBCTC: Part-time Faculty in Washington Community and Technical Colleges (1998)

KEY FINDINGS:

- Part-time faculty salaries are less than full-time faculty rates. This difference is partly attributable to the difference in responsibilities, experience and educational background. Some of the difference represents lack of comparable pay for comparable work. The exact difference between full-time and part-time salary rates is dependent upon the statistics used and will be the focus of future discussions within the college system.
- The salaries paid to part-time faculty varies by college.
- In fall 1997, most (55 percent of the 5,256 headcount) part-time instructors taught one-third classroom load or less (5 credits). Alternately, the 23 percent headcount) of the instructors teaching two-thirds or more of a load account for 44 percent of the part-time classroom load or Full Time Equivalent- Faculty (FTEF).
- The pattern of teaching at more than one college, called "Freeway Flyers," is predominately a Puget Sound situation that, during fall 1997, accounted for 13 percent of the part-time FTEF. Most teach at two colleges, however, 27 people taught at three or more colleges.
- Although colleges recruit nationally, Washington part-time instructors are hired for 50 percent of the vacant full-time faculty positions each year. Four-hundred and forty (440) former part-time faculty have become full-time teachers at the colleges during the past three years.
- The rate of employment of part-time faculty varies greatly by college and by discipline.

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board Studies: Survey of Washington State Employers' Workforce Training Needs and Practices (2004)

The WTECB conducts a comprehensive survey of Washington employers every two years. The latest survey was conducted in the fall of 2003, and the report based on the results was completed in the summer of 2004.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Extrapolating from the survey sample of 3,000 responses, of all employers (a total of about 209,000 businesses), 45% reported that they attempted to hire in the previous year. 27% of the total, or 56,000 firms (one in four employers), reported that they had difficulty in filling a position.
- By level of education required, employers had the most difficult time filling jobs requiring vocational training (either vocational associates degrees or vocational certificates). Approximately 16% of all employers reported having difficulty in finding employees with vocational training. By way of comparison, approximately 6% of employers reported difficulty in hiring someone with a bachelor's degree.

- The state of Washington is currently producing enough BA degrees to meet employer demand – in aggregate. Significant gaps remain in certain fields, such as health care, engineering and computer science.

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board Studies: Workforce Training Results 2004

The WTECB produces a biennial evaluation of the State's workforce development system called Workforce Training Results. The purpose of the report is to report the results of workforce development and to recommend areas for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS:

- The state unemployment rate during the evaluation was between 7 and 8%. The economic downturn contributed to a decline in employment and earnings results for many programs.
- Participant satisfaction remains high, although satisfaction declined slightly from previous levels.
- Participants in workforce development programs generally reflect the diversity of the state population, or are more diverse.
- As in previous evaluations, the wage outcomes for women continue to be substantially lower than for men.
- Also, as in previous evaluations, a substantial number of participants reported that their need for information on job openings was not met.

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board Studies: High Skills, High Wages (2004)

High Skills, High Wages is Washington's Strategic Plan for workforce development. The WTECB identified the following goals for the State's workforce system:

1. To close the gap between the need of employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.

2. To enable workers to make smooth transitions so they, and their employers, may fully benefit from the new, changing economy by putting in place a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.

3. To assist disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and other low-wage workers to move up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low- income workers. Specific progress will be made in improving operating agencies and reducing the earnings gap facing people of color, people with disabilities, and women.

4. To integrate workforce development programs to improve customer service

The Board identified 3-4 objectives for each goal listed above, and strategies to help attain them.

National Studies

Competitiveness Council Phase II Final Report (2004)

Gov. Locke convened the Competitiveness Council in 2001, and tasked it with investigating ways to improve Washington's business climate. The second phase of this effort, which began in 2003, focused on:

- Higher education including access, funding, and workforce training
- K-12 education
- Research, development, and commercialization
- Taxes, regulations, and infrastructure

The higher education group made the following findings and recommendations.

KEY FINDINGS:
Demographics and increasing educational requirements of many professions are creating greater demand for postsecondary education and training. Washington's higher education system does not currently have the capacity to meet that demand. The lack of sufficient capacity in Washington's higher education system is a result of insufficient resources and ineffective allocation of existing resources.

Recommendations were divided into two major groups: access and funding.

ACCESS:

- Invest first to increase the number of state supported enrollment slots by 15,752 to cover students who are currently enrolled in our state colleges and universities without state funding.
- At a minimum, provide 18,000 more state supported enrollment slots (including both general and high demand enrollments) by 2010 to sustain current participation rates and meet workforce training needs.
- Build upon the successes of the state's 2+2 system by increasing access to lower division classes at our community and technical colleges and to upper-division classes at our four-year colleges and universities, both state-supported and independent.

FUNDING:

- First, prioritize the state's existing resources to support additional general and high demand enrollments.
- Ensure that state colleges and universities are accountable, competitive, and responsive to the needs of students and employers.
- Provide incentives and flexibility to enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of higher education.
- Raise new revenues specifically for higher education.

Governor's Initiative: 2020 Commission (1998)

Governor Gary Locke formed the 2020 commission to examine the future of post-secondary education and training in 1998.

Their final report included the following recommendations:

- Expand opportunity by increasing the participation rate, with a goal of bringing public post-secondary enrollment to 310,000 student FTEs by 2020. This would require enrolling about 40,000 more students than the current participation rate would produce.
- Use all accredited post-secondary education providers to meet the expected surge in demand for post-secondary education. State policy makers are encouraged to explore new avenues in order to maximize facility utilization and produce more enrollment slots – from contracting with private and for-profit colleges, to expanding evening and weekend courses at existing public institutions.
- Create a scholarship for all students who earn a Certificate of Mastery and graduate from high school. This scholarship would be sufficient to pay tuition for a minimum of two years of post-secondary education.
- Expand and improve the information and counseling available to students and families to enable them to make better choices about their post-secondary options.
- Maintain the base funding of public institutions at or above the average of public per-student funding of peer institutions in other states.
- Provide incentive funding above the base to public institutions that propose and achieve improvements in educational quality and/or reduce costs. This funding should be offered in the form of venture capital for institutional initiatives that accomplish specific state policy objectives.

Governor's Initiative: Governor's Task Force on Higher Education (1996)

Gov. Mike Lowry convened this task force to, "Propose a new financing system and accountability measures that establish the state's commitment to efficient, effective, and innovative institutions through the year 2010."

The majority report's proposal includes the following:

- Create a dedicated fund for higher education that would be initially funded with GF-S revenues, and would grow with both inflation and the growth of the prime college-age population (18-23 year-olds).
- Business and Occupation tax credit for contributions to higher education. This 'Innovation Fund' would reduce business tax bills dollar-for-dollar for higher education investments. These investments would be reserved for quality improvements, such as reducing class size, faculty training, technology investments, etc.
- Limit resident undergraduate tuition increases to the inflation rate. Non-RUG tuition would be tied to inflation as well, but the HECB could grant authority to move these rates within a prescribed range.

- Increase Enrollment by increasing participation rate to produce 320,000 student FTEs by 2010.
- Fund inflation for higher education through 2010
- Increase eligibility for State Need Grant from 40% of median family income to 75%.
- Allow institutions to assess a surcharge on students who enroll for credits over the prescribed number of credits necessary to complete their degree.
- Direct institutions to work with the HECB and CTC system to develop performance measures.

National Studies

National Collaborative: Final Report (2004)

The National Collaborative examined higher education in Washington and four other states. After a thorough review of the current system, the group issued findings and recommendation in late 2004.

The group found a number of problem areas in the current system, and urged policy makers to address deficiencies in these areas: "Given the results of the policy audit, we recommend that Washington policy makers consider higher education policy changes that deal with these issues:

- The conflict between the increasing demand for access to community colleges and universities and their capacity to meet that demand.
- Provision of upper level courses and bachelor's degrees throughout the state.
- Transfer from community colleges to universities.
- Relationships between the public school and higher education systems.
- Adult basic education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and General Educational Development (GED) preparation.
- HECB is primarily a reactive body, and does not lead higher education policy discussions.

The Collaborative identified 'Five Key Issues' of significance in higher education policy and finance that state policy makers should begin work on immediatiely. They are:

1. The mismatch between capacity and demand should be dealt with through a combination of actions by the state, the system, and the institutions.
2. The provision of upper level courses and bachelor's degrees throughout the state should be more carefully planned.
3. Transfer of course credits from the community colleges to the universities should be streamlined and made much more predictable for the student.

4. The P-16 Council in Washington should identify an aggressive agenda of action items.

5. Adult basic education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation need much more attention.

They also made the following additional recommendations:

- Create a new and better funding system. The current system provides disincentives for programs that are aligned with state priorities.
- Create and sustain capacity of state institutions consistent with missions of institutions and the needs of the state. Funding for necessary increases in capacity should be part of the finance policy.
- Make higher education affordable to residents of the state, considering pricing (tuition and fees) and student financial aid along with state support. These are three inseparable parts of the whole.
- Reflect a realistic assessment of the capacity of the state of Washington to fund higher education.

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education: The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success (2005)

This report is based on a four-state investigation of K-16 governance known as the Partnerships for Student Success (the states involved were Florida, New York, Georgia and Oregon). The report also focused on 'broad access' institutions of higher education: schools with relaxed admissions criteria. Approximately 80% of all college students enroll in these kinds of institutions.

KEY FINDINGS:

- *Alignment of Courses and Assessments.* States need to make sure that what students are asked to know and do in high school is connected to postsecondary expectations-both in coursework and assessments. Currently, students in most states graduate from high school under one set of standards and face a disconnected and different set of expectations in college. Many students enter college unable to perform college-level work.
- *Finance.* State education finance systems must become K-16; this includes the legislative committees and staff functions that oversee finance and budgetary decisions. State finance structures are lagging behind other areas in existing K-16 reform. If education finance can span education systems, it has the potential to drive change in many other policy arenas as well.
- *Data Systems.* States must create high-quality data systems that span the K-16 continuum. K-16 data systems should identify good practices, diagnose problems, provide information about all education levels, provide students with diagnostic information to help them prepare better, assess and improve achievement, and track individual students over time across levels.[7] Without such systems, it is impossible to assess needs effectively, understand where the problems are, gain traction for changes needed, and evaluate reforms.
- *Accountability.* States need to connect their accountability systems to span K-12 and postsecondary education. Currently, accountability systems are usually designed for either K-12 or postsecondary education without much attention to the interface between the two. Accountability systems need to reflect, better, the reality of students' educational paths.

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education: Measuring Up 2004

Measuring Up 2004 grades states in six performance categories:

- Adequacy of students being prepared for education and training beyond high school;
- Ability to participate by enrolling in education and training beyond high school;
- Affordability of higher education for students and their families;
- Timeliness of students' progress towards degree/certificate completion;
- Benefits to the state of having a highly educated population; and
- Impact that post high school education and training has on student learning.

KEY FINDINGS (FOR WASHINGTON STATE):

Strengths

Preparation

- WA 8th graders perform well on national exams in math, reading, and writing. Performance on writing exams has improved over the past decade.
- The gap in attainment of a high school credential between students from low- and high-income families has narrowed, but the gap remains large.
- Two-thirds of secondary school students are taught by qualified teachers. The state has improved substantially on this measure over the past decade – more than the nation as a whole.

Completion

- Compared with other states, a large proportion of first-year students at two- and four-year colleges and universities return for their second year. Over the past decade, Washington has remained a top state on this retention measure for four-year colleges.
- Washington is a top-performer in the percentage of students at four-year colleges and universities earning a bachelor's degree within six years. The state has consistently performed well on this measure over the decade.
- A large proportion of students earn certificates or degrees relative to the number enrolled. This proportion has increased as well – more than the nationwide increase on this measure.
- Over the past decade, the gaps have narrowed between whites and minority ethnic groups – particularly Hispanics – in the proportions of students completing certificates and degrees relative to the numbers enrolled. However, substantial gaps remain.

Benefits

- Compared with other states, a high proportion of Washington residents have a bachelor's degree. However, many of these residents earned their degrees in other states.

Weaknesses

Preparation

- Compared with their peers in other states, low-income 8th graders perform poorly on national exams in math.
- Very small proportions of 11th and 12th graders take and score well on AP tests. (May be due to Running Start.)
- The percentage of young adults from minority ethnic groups with a high school credential has declined substantially.

Participation

- Compared with other states, a small proportion of working-age adults enroll in college-level education.
- About 11 % of the adult population in Washington does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent, making them ineligible for higher education.
- Over the past decade, the college participation gap between whites and minority ethnic groups has widened. The college participation rate for minority ethnic groups has declined substantially.

Affordability

Net college costs for low-and middle-income students to attend community colleges represent 40% of their annual family income. For the same students at public four-year colleges and universities; net costs represent nearly 50% of their income.

Grades:

Preparation: **B-**
Over the past decade, Washington has improved in preparing students to succeed in college.

Participation: **C**
Over the past decade, Washington has seen a decline in the proportion of students enrolling in higher education.

Affordability: **F**
Over the past decade, Washington has made no progress in providing affordable higher education opportunities.

Completion: **A-**
Washington, over the past decade, had made substantial improvement in the number of students who earn a certificate or degree in a timely manner.

Benefits: **A-**
Over the past decade, Washington has seen a substantial improvement in the benefits accruing to the state from having a more highly educated population.

Learning: **I**
Like most states, Washington received an Incomplete in learning because these are no comparable data that would allow for meaningful state-by-state comparisons in learning. The Incomplete in this category highlights a gap in our ability to measure each state's educational capital – the reservoir of high-level knowledge and skills that benefit each state.

Education Commission of the States: Issues in Community College Funding (2005)

ECS conducted a survey in fall 2004 as part of a larger study of community college funding for the state of North Carolina. The survey was undertaken to provide a better understanding of how states distribute resources to their community colleges. The survey reviewed the funding system of 11 states: Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia and Washington. The survey focused on two issues:

Does the state's funding system take into account one-year spikes in student enrollment?

Does the state funding system provide additional funding for high-cost programs such as nursing, pre-med or engineering?

One-year Spikes in Student Enrollment

All 11 states reported they and no provision within their funding system for one-year upward spikes in student enrollment, but six did report they have provisions that help to assure colleges will not see a decrease in funding if they have downward spikes in student enrollment.

High-cost Educational Programs

Five states report having no provision to fund high-cost educational programs at a higher rate. The other six states (FL, KY, OH, SC, VA) have some provisions in one of the following two categories: states that provide additional dollar amounts for students enrolled in high-cost programs, and states that adjust teacher-student ratios in their funding formulas for high-cost programs.

KEY FINDINGS:

- None of the 11 states in this survey have a mechanism for single-year spikes in enrollment. In fact, the idea seemed foreign to most interviewees.
- The idea of differentiated funding for high-cost programs was an issue that resonated with many of those interviewed, however; those from states that do not have a program like this in place indicate there are active discussions to do so in the future.
- Of the states that do make funding adjustments for high-cost programs, the one constant is that each state targeted the largest amount of funding to students in the nursing/health sciences field.

State Higher Education Executive Officers: State Higher Education Finance: Fiscal Year 2004 (2005)

The State Higher Education Finance (SHEF) report is an annual tool to help policymakers and educators created by staff from the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). The goal is to address broad public policy questions such as:

1. What level of state funding to colleges and universities is necessary to achieve the educational goals required for the economic and social well-being of the American people?

2. What tuition levels are appropriate given the costs of higher education, its benefits to individuals, and the desirability of encouraging participation?

3. What amounts and forms of student financial assistance are required to provide meaningful educational opportunities to students from low- and moderate-income families?

4. To what extent might colleges and universities increase productivity or reduce expenditures without impairing the quality of services to students?

KEY FINDINGS:

The fiscal 2004 SHEF study documents a four-year period when state funding for higher education failed to keep pace with extraordinary enrollment growth and normal inflation in the US, leaving per-student state and local funding near their lowest levels nationally in 25 years.

Current Status

- In fiscal year 2004, state and local governments provided about $69.4 billion in direct support for general operating expenses of higher education. State governments provided about 90 percent of this amount, mostly in appropriations from state tax revenues, with smaller amounts from lotteries, earnings on state endowments, and royalty or lease income.
- FY 2004 state and local support per FTE student in public institutions was $5,737, the lowest level of funding in the past 25 years, except for 1983, when state funding was $5,702 in constant 2004 dollars. In 2001, state and local funding per FTE student was $6,874, the highest point since fiscal year 1980.

Recent Trends, 2001-2004

- Since 2001, state and local appropriations for education in public colleges and universities have been essentially flat, while enrollments have grown by 11.8 percent and higher education costs have gone up to 10.3 percent, based on the Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA), derived by SHEEO from federal inflation indexes.
- The combined effects of inflation and enrollment growth reduced per student state and local government support for public higher education by 16.5 percent from 2001 to 2004, from $6,874 to $5,737 in constant dollars. State and local support per FTE decreased in real terms by 8.5 percent in 2003 and 5.6 percent in 2004.

- Net tuition revenues per FTE in public institutions grew 11.1 percent faster than inflation since 2001, partially offsetting the reduction in per student support from state and local sources. In the aggregate, states increased support for student financial aid from about $4 billion in 2001 to $5 billion in 2004, which partially addressed tuition increases and enrollment growth.
- Total educational revenues per FTE in public institutions (educational appropriations plus net tuition) fell 8.4 percent between 2001 and 2004, from $9,743 to $8,924.

National Enrollment and Funding Patterns, 1980-2004

- Contrary to much-publicized speculation, states have largely maintained operating revenues for higher education, even though they have struggled to keep pace with enrollment growth and inflation in times of recession.
- From 1980 to 2004, state and local government support was outpaced by enrollment growth and by inflation as estimated by the HECA. Constant dollar educational appropriations per student varied from year to year, at times dramatically.
- Fiscal 2004 represented the lower end of a funding cycle that left state support levels at $5,737 per student. Following previous downturns, state support per FTE student rebounded when state revenues increased and enrollment growth moderated.
- State funding for higher education rebounded in 2005 and currently shows signs of further recovery in 2006. The national average nominal increase in state tax appropriations was 3.8 percent from 2004 to 2005, according to the annual Grapevine survey from Illinois State University.

National Trends and Interstate Comparisons, 1991-2004

- Since fiscal 1991, FTE enrollments in public institutions increased by 21.8 percent. Over half of this increase occurred since fiscal 2001, the beginning of the current downturn. The percentage increase in FTE enrollment for public postsecondary institutions since 2001 has already outstripped that of the previous two decades.
- In constant 2004 dollars adjusted by the HECA, educational appropriations per FTE in public institutions dipped during the early 1990s recession and recovered by 2000. However, recent constant dollar decreases in educational appropriations per FTE result in an overall decrease of 11.7 percent. In inflation-adjusted terms, the average educational appropriation per student in 2004 was 4.1 percent below that of 1994, but 16.5 percent lower than the peak of fiscal 2001.
- Total educational revenues per FTE in public institutions remained virtually constant from 1991 to 2004, outpacing inflation by 1.4 percent. This was achieved because net tuition revenue per FTE increased by 38.6 percent while educational appropriations per FTE decreased by 11.7 percent.
- In public institutions, net tuition tends to grow as a percentage of total educational spending when state support per student decreases. Nationally, net tuition accounted for 26.1 percent of total educational revenues in 1991; it grew to 2 percent by 1993, remaining close to that level through 2002, then increased each of the last two years to its current level of 35.7 percent.
- These national trends mask substantial variation among the states. Between 1991 and 2004, public institution enrollment ranged from 86.9 percent growth in Nevada to a decline of 8.5 percent in Missouri. Constant dollar educational appropriations per FTE grew 27.3 percent in Missouri and

declined 42.2 percent in Vermont. In fiscal 2004, net tuition revenue per FTE ranged from $7,927 in Vermont to $1,152 in New Mexico. Net tuition as a percentage of total educational revenues ranged from 78.7 percent in Vermont to 12.7 percent in New Mexico.

List of Recent and Upcoming Washington Higher Education Studies

Organization	Study	Date	Website
Legislative and State Agency Studies			
House of Representatives	Subcommittee on Education Finance Structures	2005	http://www1.leg.wa.gov/House/Committees/APP/EFSSReports.htm
Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB)	2004-05 Washington State Tuition and Fee Report	February 2005	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/docs/2004-2005WAStateTuitionFeeReport.pdf
HECB	The Future of Washington's Branch Campuses	January 2005	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/docs/FutureWashingtonsBranchCampusesJan2005.pdf
HECB	Articulation and Student Transfer	January 2005	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/news/newsreports/documents/ArticulationandStudentTransferJanuary2005.pdf
HECB	Higher Education Policy Model/Enrollment Distribution Study	December 2004 (model) Report forthcoming	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/research/issues/documents/Tab6-Enrollmentplanningmodel-PowerPoint.pdf
HECB	Strategic Master Plan	December 2004	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/2004masterplan.asp
HECB	Cost of Instruction Study – 2001-02	August 2004 (revised)	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/Docs/reports/ecs01-02-Aug04rev.pdf
HECB	Final Report on Student Academic Progress	March 2004	http://www.hecb.wa.gov/docs/reports/2004StudentAcademicProgress.pdf

Note: Findings and recommendations are taken directly from reports and executive summaries and do not represent endorsement or agreement by Washington Learns

Organization	Study	Date	Website
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)	Role of Pre-college (Developmental and Remedial) Education for Recent High School Graduates Attending Washington Community and Technical Colleges - System Summary for Students Enrolled in 2003-04	November 2004	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/data/rsrchrpts/Resh04-1.pdf
SBCTC	Accountability for Results: A Portrait of the Community and Technical College System	2003	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/data/miscrpts/accountability-2003.pdf
SBCTC	Access and Success for System Goals for People of Color in Washington Community and Technical Colleges: Eighth Progress Report	June 2002	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/data/rsrchrpts/Resh02-3.pdf
SBCTC	Online Learning Students: Characteristics, Satisfaction, and Implications for Future Planning	January 2002	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/data/rsrchrpts/Resh02-2.pdf
SBCTC	Enrollments, Student Characteristics, Progress and Success for Basic Skills Students in State Support Instruction in Community and Technical Colleges	November 2001	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/data/rsrchrpts/Resh01-2%20revised1.pdf
SBCTC	Part-time Faculty in Washington Community and Technical Colleges	June 1998	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/data/rsrchrpts/Resh98-4.pdf
SBCTC and the Council of Presidents (COP)	Baccalaureate Enrollment Growth and Capacity	January 2005	http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/Education/docs/BaccalaureateCapacity/Baccalaureate_Cap_Study_House_HiEd-Jan05.ppt
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB)	Survey of Washington State Employers' Workforce Training Needs and Practices	June 2004	http://www.wtb.wa.gov/empsur04.pdf

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Organization	Study	Date	Website
WTECB	High Skills, High Wages: Washington's Workforce Development Strategic Plan	2004	http://www.wtb.wa.gov/hshwex04.pdf
WTECB	Workforce Training Results	2004	http://www.wtb.wa.gov/wtr04.pdf
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC)	Higher Education Capital Facilities: Expanding the Comparable Framework Preliminary Report	2005 (Proposed Final Report)	http://www1.leg.wa.gov/JLARC/Audit+and+Study+Reports/2005/05-10.htm
JLARC	Higher Education Facilities Preservation Study Follow-up	August 2003	http://www1.leg.wa.gov/JLARC/Audit+and+Study+Reports/2003/03-8.htm
JLARC	Educational Service Districts	February 1995	http://www1.leg.wa.gov/JLARC/Audit+and+Study+Reports/1995/95-8.htm
Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP)	Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification in Washington State	December 2004	http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rptfiles/04-12-2901.pdf
WSIPP	Higher Education Branch Campuses in Washington State	Aug. 2003	http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rptfiles/BranchCampusFinal.pdf
WSIPP	Higher Education Coordination in Washington State	Dec. 2002	http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rptfiles/HECBFinal.pdf
WSIPP	Higher Education Students Off-Campus Work Patterns	January 1999	http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/rptfiles/college_ui.pdf

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Organization	Study	Date	Website
Private/Nonprofit Organization Studies/Reports, Benchmarking and Comparative studies			
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)	Supporting Higher Ed in: Washington – State Fact Book/Policy Indicators	November 2002	http://www.wiche.edu/policy/Fact_Book/PDF/wa.pdf
State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO)	State Higher Education Finance: FY 2004	2005	http://www.sheeo.org/finance/shef05.pdf
National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (NCPPHE)	Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education	September 2004	http://measuringup.highereducation.org/
Education Commission of the States (ECS)	Issues in Community College Funding	April 2005	http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/60/67/6067.htm
ECS	Postsecondary Governance Structures: 50 State Database	1997-present	http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Governance/GovPSDB_intro.asp
ECS	State Funding for Community Colleges: A 50 State Survey	2000	http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/22/86/2286.pdf
National Collaborative for Postsecondary Education Policy	Working with States to Improve Educational Opportunity	2004	http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/61/69/6169.pdf (additional Washington-specific recommendations available from core staff team)

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